the weekly
Standard

MAY 7, 2007 $3.95

TOOTING THE HORN OF PAWLENTY
MATTHEW CONTINETTI

Beauty and the Beast

CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL on France's presidential choice

Nicolas Sarkozy

Ségolène Royal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

americanmanufacturing.org

(What we make, makes America great.)

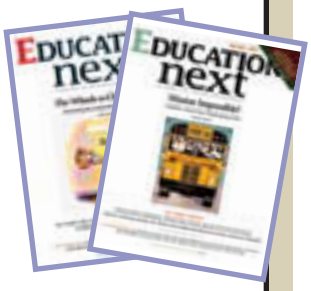
Alliance for American Manufacturing
AAM
Keeping America Strong

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cutting-Edge Commentary on K–12 Education

EDUCATION NEXT

A JOURNAL OF OPINION AND RESEARCH



SUBSCRIBE

Receive four quarterly issues for $20.

FREE ISSUE

Receive a complimentary issue of the latest Education Next without obligation.

Call 800.935.2882 or visit www.educationnext.org

In the new issue of *Education Next*

Debunking a Special Education Myth

Can spiraling special education costs explain why educational achievement has remained stagnant over the past three decades, while real education spending has more than doubled? Policy makers, education researchers, and school district officials often make the claim that private placements for special needs children drain resources away from regular education students. As it turns out, however, the evidence contradicts the private placement myth. Only a very small fraction, 0.18 percent, of disabled students are placed in private schools at public expense. And contrary to claims that this is increasingly common, the likelihood that disabled students will be placed in a private school has not grown in the last 15 years.

—Jay P. Greene and Marcus A. Winters

Catholic Schools Face Challenging Times

Despite a growing Catholic population (from 45 million in 1965 to almost 77 million today, making it the largest Christian denomination in the United States), Catholic school enrollment has plummeted from 5.2 million students in nearly 13,000 schools in 1960 to 2.5 million in 9,000 schools in 1990. Catholics make up about one-quarter of the American population, but their schools enroll less than 5 percent of all students. What happened to the Catholics? What happened to a school system that at one time educated one of every eight American children? And did it quite well.

—Peter Meyer

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

To read more, call 800.935.2882 for a free copy of the latest *Education Next*.

HOOVER INSTITUTION

. . . ideas defining a free society

Hoover Institution Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-6010 Tel: 877.466.8374 Fax: 650.723.1687 info@hoover.stanford.edu www.hoover.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BRADLEY PRIZES

Congratulations to the 2007 Bradley Prize Recipients

JOHN BOLTON

Former US Ambassador to the United Nations

Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute

MARTIN FELDSTEIN

George F. Baker Professor of Economics at Harvard University

President, National Bureau of Economic Research

ABIGAIL AND STEPHAN THERNSTROM

Abigail is Vice Chair of the US Commission on Civil Rights

Stephan is the Winthrop Professor of History at Harvard University

Both are Authors and Fellows at the Manhattan Institute

JAMES Q. WILSON

Ronald Reagan Professor of Public Policy at Pepperdine University

Author

Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipient

THE LYNDE AND HARRY BRADLEY FOUNDATION

The Bradley Prizes will be presented on May 3 at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

The Bradley Prizes recognize outstanding achievements that are consistent with the Foundation's mission statement. Founded in 1985, The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation is devoted to strengthening American democratic capitalism and the institutions, principles and values that sustain and nurture it. Its programs support limited, competent government; a dynamic marketplace for economic, cultural activity; and a vigorous defense, at home and abroad, of American ideas and institutions. Learn more at **www.bradleyfdn.org.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

May 7, 2007 • Volume 12, Number 32

2 Scrapbook ..... *George Tenet, MIT, and Sheryl Crow.*

7 Editorial ..... *'The Central Front'*

4 Casual ..... *Victorino Matus, hi-def foodie.*

Articles

8 Hollywood Girls Gone Wild *In which Laurie David and Sheryl Crow harangue Karl Rove.* ..... BY FRED BARNES

10 Alive and Well and Living in London *Why won't Britain extradite Islamic extremists?* ..... BY OLIVIER GUITTA

12 Propositioning the States *Ward Connerly's 2008 campaign.* ..... BY JENNIFER RUBIN

14 The Pentagon Cash Crunch *War is a pay-as-you-go business.* ..... BY TOM DONNELLY

15 Hail Mauritania! *An unheralded experiment in Arab democracy.* ..... BY JAMES KIRCHICK

16 Gunnar Myrdal Was Right *Social Security's fertility problem.* ..... BY JAMES C. CAPRETTA

Cover: Corbis / C. Liewig / M. Frey

Features

18 Le Showdown
The French election is down to its last two-and-a-half candidates. ..... BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

24 Tooting the Horn of Pawlenty
Meet the first Sam's Club Republican. ..... BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

Books & Arts

29 Classical Metropolis *The Alexandria of antiquity.* ..... BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

32 Battleground America *Suddenly the Midwest is up for grabs in the next election.* ..... BY KARLYN BOWMAN

33 Harvard or Bust *They'll get in their 'reach school' even if it kills them.* ..... BY STEFAN BECK

35 Mission for Moscow *Better dead than read is the verdict on the literary left.* ..... BY RON CAPSHAW

36 Mum's the Word *John Osborne's rebellion began in the cradle.* ..... BY EDWARD SHORT

38 Fanboy Tour de Force *'A spoof inside a spoof inside a spoof.'* ..... BY JOHN PODHORETZ

40 Parody ..... *Personals in the* Nation.

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
Richard Starr, *Deputy Editor* **Claudia Anderson,** *Managing Editor*
Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, *Senior Editors* **Philip Terzian,** *Literary Editor*
Stephen F. Hayes, Matt Labash, *Senior Writers* **Victorino Matus, David Skinner,** *Assistant Managing Editors*
Matthew Continetti, *Associate Editor* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Online Editor*
Sonny Bunch, *Assistant Editor* **Duncan Currie,** *Reporter* **Michael Goldfarb,** *Deputy Online Editor*
Whitney Blake, Joseph Lindsley, *Editorial Assistants*
Lev Nisnevitch, *Art Director* **Philip Chalk,** *Production Director*
Paul Weisner, *Finance Director* **Catherine Lowe,** *Marketing Director,* **Mairead Cagney,** *Accounting Manager*
Taybor Cook, *Office Manager* **Carolyn Wimmer,** *Executive Assistant* **Abigail Lavin,** *Staff Assistant*
Gerard Baker, Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, John J. DiIulio Jr., Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Brit Hume, Frederick W. Kagan, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Tod Lindberg, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
Terry Eastland, *Publisher*

the weekly Standard

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of News America Incorporated, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. Copyright 2007, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a registered trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tenet on Interrogation

There was never much question that news reports about George Tenet's new book, *At the Center of the Storm*, would focus on the former CIA director's complaints about the Bush administration and its use of intelligence. As Tenet might say, it was a "slam dunk." And, on cue, a news story late last week in the *New York Times* provided a look into Tenet's self-serving revisionism.

Readers will be able to get their fill of those excerpts from their favorite mainstream media outlets over the next couple of weeks, so we'd like to draw your attention to something unlikely to get the notice it deserves. During an interview taped for *60 Minutes*, the requisite first stop these days on the I've-got-a-book-beating-up-the-Bush-administration tour, Tenet was asked about something he does not discuss much in his book: the CIA's "enhanced interrogations" of high-value detainees.

His answers will confound Bush critics, who are guided by two articles of faith: (1) The Bush administration's interrogation techniques amount to torture, and (2) These techniques are ineffective.

Tenet, who went to the CIA after a career as a Democratic staffer on the Senate Intelligence Committee, offers a different view. According to a partial transcript of the *60 Minutes* interview leaked to the *DrudgeReport*, Tenet vigorously defends the program. He insists that what U.S. interrogators do is not torture and is, in fact, extremely valuable in the war on terror:

> Here's what I would say to you, to the Congress, to the American people, to the President of the United States: I know that this program has saved lives. I know we've disrupted plots. . . . I know this program alone is worth more than the FBI, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency put together, have been able to tell us.

In a nation serious about fighting a war on terror, Tenet's last claim—that this program has provided better intelligence than the FBI, the CIA, and the NSA combined—should trigger second thoughts among those many armchair intelligence analysts who have called for its termination. And it should cause another examination of the relative ineffectiveness of the three most important antiterror agencies of the U.S. government. We're not holding our breath.

Tenet's thoughts on why the program is necessary also deserve a mention: "These [terrorist detainees] are people who will never, ever, ever tell you a thing. These are people who know who's responsible for the next terrorist attack, [who] wouldn't blink an eyelash about killing you, your family, me and my family and everybody in this town." ♦

James Madison Weeps

The Scrapbook was pleased the other morning when two paperback volumes crossed our desk, courtesy of Princeton University Press. It seems that they are the opening editions of something called the James Madison Library in American Politics, which is "devoted to reviving important American political writings of the recent and distant past." Sean Wilentz, Princeton history professor and stalwart defender of the Democratic faith, is general editor. And the two books in question are *The New Industrial State* by John Kenneth Galbraith (1967) and *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1960) by Barry Goldwater.

As a veteran trend-spotter, The Scrapbook has noticed with dismay that modern reprints almost always feature "new forewords" by contemporary windbags to explain to us poor readers what, exactly, we are reading and, worst of all, to give us the latest thinking on the subject. Alas, the James Madison Library in American Politics is no exception. The Galbraith tome features an admiring "new foreword" by Prof. James K. Galbraith who, to our great surprise, considers his late Dad's work "a landmark" in economic writing and a "great work of theory." The Goldwater book contains a new foreword by George F. Will.

Then we noticed that *The Conscience of a Conservative* is blessed with something that *The New Industrial State* is not: A "new afterword" as well! But instead of choosing someone whose views might be worth pondering, Professor Wilentz recruited, of all unlikely people, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., recovering heroin addict and radio conspiracy theorist, who supplies a 17-page diatribe that, for sheer incoherence and irrelevance, must be endured to be believed.

Paying barely a moment's attention to the Goldwater text, Kennedy swerves from harangues about Wall Street "shills" and "authoritarian preachers, mean-spirited cable-TV bully boys, and AM hate-radio jocks" to "the acerbic politics of Newt Gingrich and Tom DeLay . . . Karl Rove's swift-boating of White House critics and the coordinated media thuggery of Michael Savage, Ann Coulter, Bob Novak, and Sean Hannity, with all of their empty accusations about liberals as traitors."

Well! Since Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is currently engaged as public advocate for his cousin Michael Skakel, convicted murderer of 15-year-old Martha Moxley, The Scrapbook chooses not to engage him on his curious outburst. Our question, instead, is for Profes-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of May 6, 1996)

sor Wilentz: Why a hostile riposte to Goldwater, but not to Galbraith? We would suggest, in the second edition, a "new afterword" for *The New Industrial State* by someone with a clear view of Galbraithian nonsense and superior academic credentials to Robert F. Kennedy Jr.: Say, Ann Coulter. ♦

Can't Make This Up

As reported Friday, April 27, in the *Harvard Crimson*, MIT's dean of admissions, Marilee Jones, after a nine-year stint in that position, resigned when her three college degrees were exposed as phony. Jones had attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for a short time without graduating.

As the *Crimson* reported: "In a prepared statement, Jones said she had 'misled the Institute about my academic credentials' in applying for her first job at MIT in 1979, and 'did not have the courage to correct my résumé when I applied for my current job or at any time since.'"

But wait, there's more! "The revelation was a shocking turn for Jones, who had been highly regarded in her field and widely praised for MIT's efforts to reduce student anxiety in college admissions. Her profile surged last year with the publication of *Less Stress, More Success*, which she wrote with pediatrician Kenneth R. Ginsburg.

"Among other pieces of advice in the book, Jones warned students against 'making up information to present yourself as something you are not.' She wrote, 'You must always be completely honest about who you are.'"

Sage advice. ♦

Spare a Square?

Okay, we tried but we just can't ignore singer Sheryl Crow's comedic debut. As a prelude to her Karl Rove ambush (see page 8), Crow floated this idea on how to save the environment: "I propose a limitation be put on how many squares of toilet paper can be used in any one sitting. Now, I don't want to rob any law-abiding American of his or her God-given rights, but I think we are an industrious enough people that we can make it work with only one square per restroom visit, except, of course, on those pesky occasions where 2 to 3 could be required."

It didn't take long before critics began poo-pooing her proposal. We're not sure whether the "Strong Enough" singer favors one-ply or two, but we tend to think her idea, which she describes as "in the earliest stages of development" and "worth investigating," fudges a lot of the details. In the end, we're certain this idea will not gain any movement. (And yes, we know, enough already with the cheap puns. But it could have been worse. We could have named this item "All I Wanna Doo" or talked about how Crow is simply brown-nosing Al Gore, or . . .) ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Finally joining the high-definition television community, I've come to enjoy several channels in HD, including HBO, ESPN, Discovery, and National Geographic. Not that everything in HD is ideal, mind you. (Here, I am thinking of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, Joakim Noah, and anything on Cinemax after 10 P.M.) But one of my favorite channels is INHD, particularly on Wednesday nights. It begins with *Three Sheets*, a brilliant show in which host Zane Lamprey drinks his way around the globe, sampling local libations like *pivo* in Prague, sake in Japan, and snake bile in Taiwan. A half hour later we get *Uncorked* with the rotund Billy Merritt, a man who knows all about beer but little of wine, and educates himself (and the viewers) on oenological issues such as decoding a wine list and understanding the distinction between Pouilly-Fuissé and Pouilly-Fumé.

The best program, however, follows at 10 P.M. Called *After Hours with Daniel*, the hour-long show (currently on hiatus) offers viewers an intimate look inside the world of acclaimed celebrity chef Daniel Boulud. And, really, who wouldn't want that?

Unless of course you've never heard of Daniel Boulud. Raised on a farm near Lyon, France, Daniel entered the restaurant business at age 14. Soon he was training under renowned French chefs like Roger Vergé and Michel Guérard. When he arrived in America, Daniel's first job was in Washington, cooking for the European Commission (God only knows what he thought of the District's eating scene in the early 1980s). Eventually the rising chef started his own restaurant in New York and later took the helm at Le Cirque.

Today, Daniel runs a total of five distinguished restaurants in New York, Palm Beach, and Las Vegas (but interestingly none in our nation's capital—the experience must have scarred him). He's published numerous cook books, though none with a suggestive title like *The Naked Chef* or *Nigella Bites*. By far his most valuable is *Letters to a Young Chef*, in which Daniel advises aspiring cooks to find a mentor, pay one's dues, master an established chef's recipes before experimenting on one's own, and, naturally, network. Daniel also sells his own food products and kitchenware.

Darren Gygi

You may wonder what separates Daniel from, say, überchef Emeril Lagasse. For one, the Frenchman has yet to do a sitcom—Emeril's eponymous show on NBC lasted all of one season. Daniel also doesn't use annoying catchphrases like "kick it up a notch" or "Bam!" He is, for the most part, a rather mild-mannered gentleman. I say "for the most part" because he is known for the occasional flare-up—not that colorful language in the kitchen should come as a shock. (Unfortunately, Daniel is also in the midst of a legal battle against former employees who are alleging racial discrimination, though he vehemently denies this and is suing the organization that represents the plaintiffs. At the same time, Daniel is known for his generosity toward his loyal workers and sits on the boards of numerous charities.)

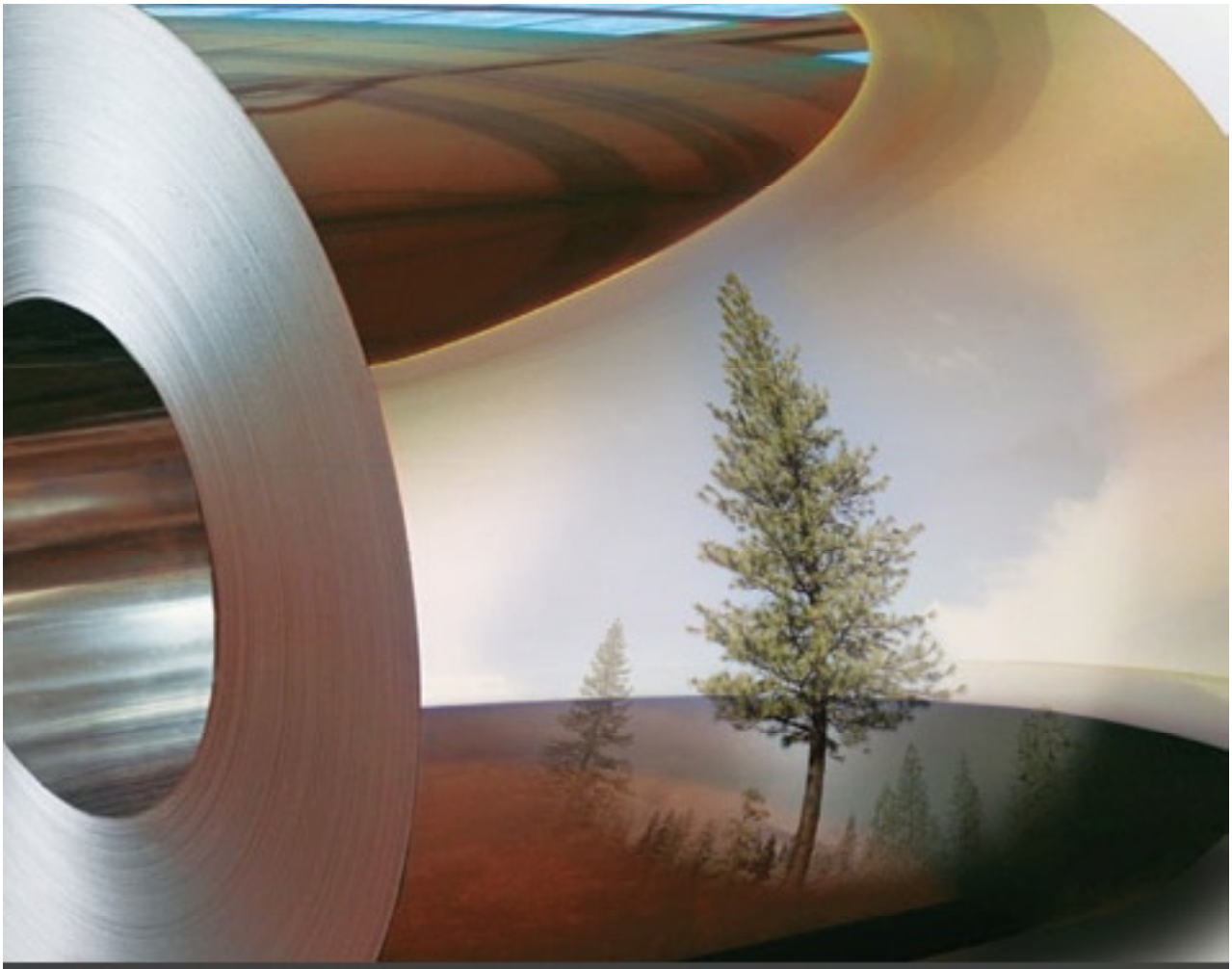
In any event, when the camera rolls in *After Hours*, expect no outbursts whatsoever. Instead, things proceed correctly (though if you look in the eyes of Daniel's staff, you can see a glint of nervousness). We watch as Daniel patiently prepares meatballs *fricadelle-Lyonnaise* and a *vacherin* of licorice and roasted pears while his co-chef for the episode assembles a Smorgasbord de Luxe. Then they serve it to their guests, who include fellow chefs, restaurateurs, actors, food writers, and, on one occasion, Tiki Barber. What follows is a casual but elegant dinner with lively conversation, mostly about food.

In one episode, *Gourmet* editor Ruth Reichl defends the practice of food criticism, explaining her obligation is to the reader and not the restaurant staff, who may be out of a job because of a negative review. (So tense is the relationship between reviewer and reviewee these days that proprietor Jeffrey Chodorow has banned one *New York Times* critic from all of his restaurants for panning one of them, Kobe Club.) Reichl then asks why the chefs at the table went into the business in the first place. Celebchef Rocco DiSpirito admits he was motivated, in part, by a desire for fame and fortune. Daniel, on the other hand, says that it was simply that he takes pleasure in feeding other people.

An admirable sentiment. In fact, I would like to be one of those people. So if Monsieur Boulud reads this, he should please know I would be more than happy to take a train to New York, pull up a chair next to Tiki Barber, and eat whatever he serves, even *tête de veau* (I'd just add ketchup). If not, no worries. I'll content myself with watching others dine at his table—in high definition, of course. Plus, it'll beat whatever is on CinemaxHD at that hour. Probably.

Victorino Matus

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE CLEAN LITTLE SECRET

More steel is recycled each year than all other materials combined. But that's just part of steel's environmental story.

Three-fourths of all American steel ends up recycled into new products, part of the steel industry's comprehensive environmental commitment. Over the past decade, American steelmakers have reduced the energy required to produce one ton of steel by 28 percent – and we've already reduced emissions to levels well below Kyoto standards. Innovation and technology have transformed America's steel industry into one of the world's most competitive, sustainable and environmentally progressive.

The New Steel. Feel the Strength.

For more information, visit [illegible].org

A message from the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Investing to ensure our energy future

The oil and natural gas industry's recent solid financial results make possible the massive investments critical to ensuring future energy supplies for all Americans. Since 1992, oil and natural gas companies have invested more than $1 trillion on a range of long-term energy initiatives, from finding new oil and natural gas to expanding refinery capacity to developing emerging energy technologies.

It's all part of our long-term commitment to ensure America's energy future for generations to come.

EnergyTomorrow.org

THE *people* OF AMERICA'S OIL AND NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

© 2007 API

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

'The Central Front'

On April 26, around the same time the Senate passed a war spending bill containing a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus, the commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, delivered an impressive briefing on the state of the war to reporters at the Pentagon. Petraeus said his remarks were roughly what he had been saying in the previous couple of days to members of Congress—minus Speaker Nancy Pelosi, it should be noted, who was too "busy" to attend Petraeus's briefing. For the speaker's benefit, and for the benefit of our readers, we print here brief excerpts from Petraeus's opening statement and responses to questions—which didn't get nearly the amount of attention they deserved, and which are worth reading in full. (The entire transcript can be retrieved at www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3951.)

PETRAEUS: The operational environment in Iraq is the most complex and challenging I have ever seen. . . . Today, members of al Qaeda, extremist militias, and Sunni insurgent groups seek to destroy what Iraqi leaders are trying to build. Political parties with ethnosectarian interests, limited governmental capacity, and corruption add additional challenges, and exceedingly unhelpful activities by Iran and Syria—especially those by Iran, about which we have learned a great deal in the past month—compound the enormous problems facing the new Iraq.

The situation is, in short, exceedingly challenging, though . . . there has been progress in several areas in recent months despite the sensational attacks by al Qaeda, which have, of course, been significant blows to our effort and which cause psychological damage that is typically even greater than their physical damage. Iraq is, in fact, the central front of al Qaeda's global campaign and we devote considerable resources to the fight against al Qaeda Iraq. We have achieved some notable successes in the past two months, killing the security emir of eastern Anbar province, detaining a number of key network leaders, discovering how various elements of al Qaeda Iraq operate, taking apart a car bomb network that had killed 650 citizens of Baghdad, and destroying several significant car bomb factories. Nonetheless, al Qaeda Iraq remains a formidable foe. . . . The extremist militias in Iraq also are a substantial problem and must be significantly disrupted. . . .

Our achievements have not come without sacrifice. Our increase in operational tempo, location of our forces in the populations they are securing, and conduct of operations in areas where we previously had no presence, as well as the enemy's greater use of certain types of explosive devices, have led to an increase in our losses. Our Iraqi partners have sacrificed heavily as well, with losses generally two to three times ours, or even more. . . .

We do definitely see links to the greater al Qaeda network. . . . There is no question but that there is a network that supports the movement of foreign fighters through Syria into Iraq. . . . The Iranian involvement has really become much clearer to us and brought into much more focus during the interrogation of the members—the heads of the Qazali network and some of the key members of that network that have been in detention now for a month or more. This is the head of the secret cell network, the extremist secret cells. They were provided substantial funding, training on Iranian soil, advanced explosive munitions and technologies, as well as run-of-the-mill arms and ammunition, in some cases advice, and in some cases even a degree of direction. When we captured these individuals—the initial capture, and then there have been a number of others since then—we discovered, for example, a 22-page memorandum on a computer that detailed the planning, preparation, approval process, and conduct of the operation that resulted in five of our soldiers being killed in Karbala. . . . [T]he spectacular car bomb attacks, which we believe are generally al Qaeda and elements sort of connected to al Qaeda. Typically, in fact, still we believe that, oh, 80 percent to 90 percent of the suicide attacks are carried out by foreigners. That's a network, again, that typically brings them in through Syria and is—again a major concern and certainly a hope that Syria will crack down on the ability of people to come through their airport and so forth and then be brought into Iraq. . . .

I think you have to be realistic and acknowledge there is going to be a continuation of some level of sensational attacks. . . . To prevent those, you know, the Iraqi and coalition forces have to protect everything and [the extremists] only have to attack one thing, some of that is going to happen. . . . We feel [there has been] incremental progress; it's very difficult to demonstrate. . . . It means nothing happened, in most cases. In other words, there were not sectarian murders. . . . You know, all of this is actually so foreign, I think, in the minds of most people, who see the news and of course do see that day's explosion or something like that. And actually there is a city of 7 million in which life goes on, and again, citizens are determined to carry on with their life.

—Gen. David Petraeus, for the Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hollywood Girls Gone Wild

In which Laurie David and Sheryl Crow harangue Karl Rove. BY FRED BARNES

The showdown at the White House Correspondents' dinner was more emotional and lasted longer than was first reported. It started when Laurie David introduced herself to Karl Rove. He knew who she was—Hollywood's leading Bush-hater and a producer of *An Inconvenient Truth*, Al Gore's film on global warming. David quickly launched into a harangue. President Bush has done nothing on global warming, she said. Rove answered that Bush has funded more research on the subject than any president. That's worthless, David responded. All the scientific questions have been answered, she insisted. Now's the time for action! Rove cited the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which projects a modest rise in sea level of 7 to 23 inches over the next century. David told Rove he was wrong. We've had the hottest summer and winter ever, she said, plus extreme weather events. The president needs to talk to real global warming experts. Rove said he already does. "Would you like me to give you a list?" he asked. She didn't. You don't have anybody who understands the seriousness of the issue talking to the president, David said. Yes, we do, Rove said, mentioning the president's science adviser, Dr. John Marburger.

That's when the debate got more heated and more physical. Sheryl Crow, the singer, suddenly appeared. Without introducing herself, she demanded that Rove tell her how many corporations were financing Marburger's research. Rove responded that Marburger has a long and distinguished academic record. David said Bush must lead on global warming and America must emulate China—China!—by signing the Kyoto Protocol. (China indeed signed, but didn't agree to curb greenhouse gases.)

Crow was more insistent, poking Rove in the chest and pinching his arm. She said Rove worked for her. Rove said he worked for the American people. Crow said she and David were the American people. And at that point, Rove turned and sat back down at his table, where he was a guest of the *New York Times*.

The point of recounting this stunt by two of Hollywood's most prominent limousine liberals—who have accused Rove of rudeness—is to put him in the proper political context. He is the chief target of Democrats, liberals, and the left, and they burn with a desire to see him discredited, fired, and jailed. If all else fails, and it has so far, they'll settle for tainting him as impolite.

A few Democrats have talked of impeaching President Bush, but that idea is a nonstarter. Representative Dennis Kucinich has called for impeaching Vice President Cheney. But with enemies like Kucinich, Cheney doesn't need friends. When the Democratic presidential candidates were polled at a debate in South Carolina last week, they pointedly failed to agree with Kucinich. So that leaves Rove at the top of the Democratic hit list.

Rove is more than a symbol. He is the architect of Bush's election triumphs and an influential player in pushing the president's agenda. He represents Republican success. The Democratic strategy now is to criminalize that success by treating normal political conduct by the Bush administration, spearheaded by Rove, as a series of criminal acts.

In a speech last week, House Democratic Caucus chairman Rahm Emanuel declared that corruption in the Bush White House is worse than that of the Nixon administration in Watergate. "In many ways, what we have seen from this administration is far more extensive than that scandal," he said. The interests of the Republican party have been elevated over the national interest. "This is no accident," Emanuel claimed. "It's all by design."

And the chief designer, in Emanuel's scheme of things, is Rove. In 2000, Rove "often drew an analogy between that election and the election of 1896, in which adviser Mark Hanna joined forces with many of the plutocrats of that Gilded Age and ushered in a 35-year era of Republican dominance," Emanuel said. "Without a trace of reserve, George Bush and Karl Rove set out to recreate that earlier era of one-party rule."

Of course they did. They created a majority center-right coalition (overturned by the 2006 election), just as Hanna put together a Republican coalition of the well-heeled and the working class, and just as FDR created a dominant Democratic majority made up of Northern liberals and Southern segregationists. There's a name for this kind of activity: politics.

So what are Rove's crimes? That's what Democrats, now in control of Congress and armed with subpoena power, are desperately looking for. Their hopes initially rested with special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald. When he cleared Rove of wrongdoing in the CIA leak case, their disappointment was palpable.

Now they've turned to congressional fishing expeditions. When Rove's name turned up peripherally in the controversy over eight fired

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. attorneys, they salivated. Democrats said he must testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee and not just on the case of the U.S. attorneys, but on everything. "What else was Karl Rove doing when it came to other activities, departments of the government?" asked Senate Democratic whip Dick Durbin.

The White House has refused to send Rove to testify under oath and on the record (with a transcript resulting), suspecting Democrats would set a trap to catch him in some discrepancy with other testimony and generate a criminal case. Without Rove to gang up on, Democrats have tried a backdoor approach by subpoenaing a Rove aide, Sara Taylor.

Two other probes reflect the obsession with Rove. Both are based on the assumption that normal politics as practiced by Rove and Republicans is criminal. One investigation is looking at political briefings for political appointees—not career civil servants—at federal departments. The briefings, a longstanding practice, were delivered by Rove aides.

The other concerns separate Republican National Committee email accounts used by Rove and others. About these, Emanuel said, "I have a simple question and it remains unanswered: Why?" In truth, there's a simple answer, one well-known to Emanuel. The RNC email accounts were set up for political business, which is not supposed to be carried out on government email accounts. If Rove had instead used government email for political messages, Democrats would be after him for that.

Even in Watergate, no single aide in the Nixon White House was pursued as relentlessly as Rove has been. Yet these investigations have uncovered one dry hole after another. And unless beating Democrats by ordinary political means becomes a crime, Rove will remain at large and at work. The best Democrats can hope for is to insult and assault him at a Washington dinner. ♦

Alive and Well and Living in London

Why won't Britain extradite Islamic extremists?

BY OLIVIER GUITTA

A few days before the March 11 suicide bombing that rocked Casablanca, Moroccan police arrested a big fish: Saad Husseini, number two in the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM), the outfit responsible for terror attacks in Casablanca in 2003 and Madrid in 2004 that killed a total of 236 people. But while Husseini sits in jail, his boss, Mohamed Guerbouzi, lives a free man in Britain, despite being sentenced in absentia to a 20-year term by a Moroccan court.

Morocco has sought Guerbouzi's extradition, but the British government refuses even to arrest him, deeming the evidence provided insufficient, according to the newspaper *Aujourd'hui Le Maroc*. Indeed, London still hosts a Who's Who of dangerous Islamists—Rachid Ghannouchi, leader of the main Tunisian Islamist party; Anjem Choudary, deported from Lebanon to the United Kingdom in 2005 and seen taking part in the violent protests of the Danish cartoons of Muhammad; the Saudi national Saad al-Faqih, listed as a supporter of al Qaeda by both the U.S. Treasury and the United Nations, and so on. There's a reason for the moniker the British capital earned in the 1990s (also the title of a 2006 book by the journalist Melanie Phillips)—Londonistan.

For over a decade, French authorities have been frustrated by their British counterparts' relative inaction on extremism. In the 1990s, when a French investigative magistrate went to London to interview eight suspected members of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA), for instance, British authorities denied him access to the suspects. In 1998 and 1999, the DGSE, the French equivalent to the CIA, reportedly mounted its own surveillance of London's Finsbury Park mosque and of extremist leaders such as Abu Hamza and Abu Qatada.

Christophe Chaboud, head of the French antiterrorism coordination unit, told the *Guardian* that Britain failed to take action against Abu Hamza long after it was given ample evidence of his extensive involvement in terrorism. It wasn't until 2004 that Hamza was finally arrested. He is now serving a seven-year sentence for soliciting murder and inciting racial violence. And it took Britain ten years to finally extradite Rachid Ramda, the mastermind of the 1995 terror campaign in France that killed 8 and injured more than 100.

One explanation for the tolerance British authorities display toward Islamic radicals was offered by Alain Chouet, former head of the antiterrorism unit at the DGSE. Citing British colleagues, he told authors Stéphane Berthomet and Guillaume Bigot in 2005 that Islamists had deposited hundreds of millions of pounds in London banks. Said Chouet, "Nobody wanted to kill the golden goose."

Defenders of British policy reasoned that by allowing radicals to stay in Britain, the authorities could keep them under surveillance and thus prevent attacks on the homeland. Unfortunately, that calculation turned out to be wrong.

On July 7, 2005, London was attacked, at a cost of 52 lives, and Prime Minister Blair announced, "The rules of the game have changed." He appointed a select committee to advise him on tackling extremism. One of its

Olivier Guitta is the founder of www.thecroissant.com, *a foreign affairs and counterterrorism newsletter.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

members, however, was none other than Tariq Ramadan, the controversial Swiss Islamist denied entry to the United States in 2004 and to France as long ago as 1995 for his dubious connections. Unsurprisingly, the first recommendation of this task force was to cancel Holocaust Memorial Day (instituted in 2001) because it was "offensive to Muslims," a recommendation that so far has not been adopted.

One of Britain's main Muslim nongovernmental organizations, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), describes Muslim Brotherhood leader Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi—who defends suicide attacks on civilians in Israel and U.S. troops in Iraq in his popular commentaries on Al Jazeera TV—as a "defender of human rights." The MCB spokesman recently stated, "To call for violence against British society is unacceptable," implying that against other countries it might be fine. The longtime general secretary of the MCB, Iqbal Sacranie—knighted by the queen in 2005—said of writer Salman Rushdie back in 1989, after the Ayatollah Khomeini deemed Rushdie's book *The Satanic Verses* blasphemous and called for his murder: "Death perhaps is a bit too easy for him." Rushdie recently retorted: "If that's the only moderate Muslim Blair could find!"

According to conservative MP Michael Gove, this picture is dispiriting for genuinely moderate Muslims. They see the most religiously conservative and politically provocative groups enjoy the lion's share of attention, and they wonder how serious the British government is about countering extremism.

By and large, though, British Muslims are the most radicalized Muslim community in Europe. An ICM Poll survey in February 2006 found that 40 percent of British Muslims favor the institution of *sharia* (Islamic law) in Britain. Another sometime adviser to the British government, Ahmad Thomson—a Rhodesia-born convert to Islam and a member of the Association of Muslim Lawyers—used this smooth formulation in the Cambridge University magazine *Ar-Risaakh* a couple of years ago: "I look forward to the day when the majority of British people have voted in favour of being governed in accordance with the Sharia of Islam." Thomson has argued that "Blair decided to go to war in Iraq because he is under the influence of a sinister group of Jews and Free Masons."

Since the bombings of 7/7, British authorities have clamped down on a few of the most vocal radical preachers, prosecuting Abu Hamza, for example, and expelling Omar Bakri. Yet proselytism is still going strong, if a little more discreetly. Lord Carlile, who was a parliamentary "reviewer" of Britain's anti-terrorist laws, estimates that more than 20 radical imams are still preaching. Mosques are no longer the preferred recruiting ground, however, according to journalist Dominique Thomas: Prayer rooms, college campuses, and prisons have assumed that distinction.

The director of the London-based Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity, Patrick Sookhdeo—who predicted several years ago that the next wave of radical Islam in Britain would involve suicide bombings—is critical of British authorities. In 2006, Sookhdeo told the *Telegraph*: "The whole approach towards Muslim militants was based on appeasement; 7/7 proved that that approach does not work—yet it is still being followed." He envisions Islamic communities within Britain eventually forming a state within a state if the government does not stop making concessions to Islamist leaders.

If that sounds alarmist, consider that in September 2006, British police agreed to consult with a panel of Muslim leaders prior to launching counterterrorist operations. Panel members will offer to assess whether the information police have regarding a suspect is adequate and how a raid will impact community relations.

This general approach is having an impact on Britain's foreign policy. Pressure is mounting from the Muslim community, seconded by Labour party politicians, for Britain to abandon its close links with America. Arabists in the Foreign Office also advocate closer links to Islamists like the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and a drawing back from the Atlanticist legacy. The young man in charge of Islamic affairs at the Foreign Office, Mockbul Ali, is himself an Islamist, who successfully lobbied to allow Sheikh Qaradawi—still barred from the United States—to visit London.

Almost two years after 7/7, British authorities seem oblivious to the consequences of their tolerance. But they might ask themselves: Why should anyone assume that British shoe bomber Richard Reid was an isolated case? The truth is, as long as extremist recruiters continue to operate more or less freely in the United Kingdom, Britain must be considered a potential source of danger to American security—a state of affairs that could seriously damage relations with our best ally in Europe. ♦

Advertising Sales

Peter Dunn, *Associate Publisher pdunn@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3334*

Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising Director nswezey@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3355*
Robert Dodd, *Canada Advertising Manager bob@doddmedia.com; 905-885-0664*
Noel Buckley, *Canada Advertising Manager noel@doddmedia.com; 905-684-5085*
Patrick F. Doyle, *West Coast Advertising Manager patrick.doyle@mcginleydoyle.com; 415-777-4383*
Don Eugenio, *Midwest Advertising Manager doneugenio@weeklystandard.com; 312-953-7236*
Amanda Belden, *Account Executive and online sales abelden@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3350*

For more information, visit ***weeklystandard.com****, click on the* ***About Us*** *button at the top, and select* ***Advertise****.*
For customer service, please call 1-800-274-7293. *For new subscription orders, please call* 1-800-283-2014.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Propositioning the States

Ward Connerly's 2008 campaign.

BY JENNIFER RUBIN

If Ward Connerly has his way, on Election Day 2008 no fewer than five states will host referenda to bar racial preferences in public college admissions, employment, and contracting. If the measures succeed, Connerly explains in an interview, "we will be witnessing the end of an era" in which racial, ethnic, and gender preferences have been used to promote "diversity" and the social advancement of women and minorities.

Envisioning a repudiation of the "diversity rationale," Connerly says that "we're going to abbreviate the 'twenty-five years.'" He's referring to the following statement from Sandra Day O'Connor, who wrote in *Grutter* v. *Bollinger*, the 2003 Supreme Court decision permitting race to be used as one of many factors in university admissions, "Twenty-five years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary."

"Ward has played a crucial role in providing a face with which to identify the campaign against preferences," says Michigan State University professor William B. Allen. As a member of the University of California Board of Regents, Connerly championed the 1995 referendum ending the state's racial admissions preferences. In 1996, Connerly guided passage of Proposition 209, repealing California's racial preferences in public school admissions, employment, and contracting. He led a similar measure in Washington state.

Most recently, in Michigan in 2006, Connerly set out to prove the Supreme Court "got it wrong" in 2003 when it upheld the constitutionality of the University of Michigan Law School's use of race "as one of many factors" to achieve student diversity. Even longtime colleagues doubted Connerly could succeed in a Democratic state with a high minority population where politicians of both parties joined academics, clergy, business, union, and civil rights leaders to oppose the measure. A poll before Election Day 2006 showed Connerly's measure—dubbed the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative—losing by 10 points. Yet days later voters overwhelmingly approved the measure, 58 percent to 42 percent. The result was even more remarkable given the wide margin of victory for two Democrats, Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who won reelection 56 percent to 42 percent, and Sen. Debbie Stabenow, who won reelection 57 percent to 41 percent. Both politicians received fewer votes than Connerly's initiative.

According to Connerly, Michigan "radically altered the playing field" in the debate over preferences. The stark gap between elite and popular opinion and the margin of victory of the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative encouraged Connerly to seek a knock-out blow against preferences. Todd Gaziano, director for legal and judicial studies at the Heritage Foundation, says Connerly is "savvy to seize the moment" and press his agenda for a race-neutral society.

Connerly systematically surveyed states before determining the best locations for his 2008 referenda. His prime considerations were whether he would have local support (and thereby combat what he calls the "carpetbagger" label) and whether he would have a "good shot of winning." Beginning on April 23, Connerly traveled to Colorado, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arizona, and South Dakota announcing that they were the selected states.

Connerly says two things are responsible for the gulf between elite and popular opinion on racial preferences. First, racial preference proponents believe that they have the "moral high ground" in defending racial preferences designed to aid the "disadvantaged." Second, Connerly believes that many are simply cowed by civil rights activists and academics who label preference opponents "racists." "There are a lot of people who feel very, very strongly that if you don't support ethnic and racial preferences you are evil," says Roger Clegg, president and general counsel of the Center for Equal Opportunity.

In 2008, Connerly plans to emphasize empirical data challenging the premise that racial preferences are necessary to assist minorities. Clegg explains: "If you could persuade African Americans that affirmative action is a bad idea, the fight would be over." Pointing to the work of academics who have studied the efficacy of affirmative action, Clegg says that it may be possible to persuade people that racial preferences are "not doing what they are supposed to do."

In late 2004, UCLA law professor Richard Sander's *Stanford Law Review* article, "A Systemic Analysis of Affirmative Action in American Law Schools," created a firestorm by documenting that "black law students are nearly two-and-one-half times as likely as white law students to not graduate from law school, four times as likely to fail the bar on their first attempt, and six times as likely to never pass the bar." Sander describes how racial preferences create a "mismatch effect" between the beneficiaries and elite law schools by assigning "blacks to law schools where they labor under a significant academic disadvantage. This disadvantage leads to low grades (roughly half of black law students are in the bottom tenth of their law school classes), and very low law school grades lead more often to academic dismissal, dropping out, and trouble on the bar."

Sander's work ignited fierce criticism, but he contends his opponents have not shaken his conclusion that preferences harm minorities. His most

Jennifer Rubin is a writer in Virginia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

powerful evidence may be the continuing disparity between bar exam passage rates despite widespread racial preferences at law schools: In 1994 the rate for bar passage was 91 percent for whites and 61 percent for African Americans. Now it is 78 percent for whites and 47 percent for African Americans.

Also challenging the elite consensus is Dan Golden, whose book *The Price of Admission* details the degree to which academically underqualified students received preferential treatment due to factors including race, athletic skill, legacy status, and "development" potential (large donation prospects). Golden estimates that at least 50 percent of students at elite schools are admitted on nonmerit factors.

The 2006 Michigan ballot results, according to Peter Schmidt of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, have made university administrators "very, very nervous" and have pushed "farther underground" evidence that race is a factor in determining admission. Connerly and his supporters dub this the search for "proxies for race"—criteria that appear "race neutral" but aim to find the same pool of minority applicants. The Heritage Foundation's Gaziano says these race proxies are "just as bad or worse" than overt racial preferences. He contends they are still unconstitutional since they are designed to classify students by race, just as decades ago "literacy" tests barred African Americans from voting. Moreover, Gaziano says, these measures "mask what is really going on" in university admissions processes, creating "suspicion and resentment" as to whether students were admitted on their own merit.

Exemplifying what Prof. Allen calls the universities' "high dudgeon about what to do about the threat to 'diversity,'" the College Board issued a report this month exhorting universities to mount a defense of racial preferences. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that the College Board admonished academics to explain "the need for maintaining the academic freedom of higher-education institutions to use race and ethnicity in enrollment-management practices." The board also called on academics to create alliances with other interest groups who can defend preferences "threatened by ballot measures."

Connerly may have more support in 2008 than he did in Michigan in 2006. He says politicians will be "much bolder" on the issue of preferences in this election cycle, and reports promises of support from many in the targeted states. At least one GOP presidential contender, former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani, has consistently opposed racial preferences. As mayor, Giuliani ended minority "set asides" for city contracts and hiring as well as the City University of New York's "open admissions" policy, which was designed to increase minority enrollment by dropping academic requirements for admission.

Asked to comment for this story, Giuliani responded through a campaign-issued statement, citing the mayor's commitment to ensuring "all Americans have a fair opportunity to compete," while declaring "I believe our nation must be committed to equal treatment for all and preferential treatment for none." Former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney has not spoken publicly on the Michigan initiative, but his campaign says he "does not support quotas or preferences." Meanwhile, Arizona senator John McCain's campaign responded that the candidate did not yet have a position on Connerly's potential referenda.

No doubt Connerly will face fierce opposition in 2008, as he did in 2006 in Michigan, where preference proponents unleashed a torrent of personal attacks against him. This is nothing new for Connerly, who has endured years of abuse from civil rights activists. Asked why he persists, Connerly tells of his childhood. He was born in Louisiana, traveled in the Jim Crow South, and married across race lines—once an illegal act in many states. "Trying to move the nation beyond race is something I've done all my life," Connerly says. The success or failure of his 2008 referenda will say much about whether the country is ready to follow Connerly's lead. ♦

Author and Professor

MARVIN OLASKY

In Depth
Book TV on C-SPAN2
Sunday, May 6, Noon - 3 pm ET

Join us for a conversation with Marvin Olasky, editor-in-chief of *World Magazine* and a professor of journalism at the University of Texas. He is the author of over a dozen books including *The Tragedy of American Compassion* and *The Politics of Disaster*.

Call in during the program to talk to Marvin Olasky, or e-mail your questions for him to booktv@c-span.org.

Check TV listings for C-SPAN2.
booktv.org

Book tv on C-SPAN2

Created by Cable. Offered as a Public Service.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Pentagon Cash Crunch

War is a pay-as-you-go business.

BY TOM DONNELLY

The Senate majority leader's "position is irresponsible. . . . We won the war but we are in danger of losing the peace. [Our adversary] is counting on the United States and Europe losing interest—and losing our will—and not staying the course. . . . Funding in the supplemental would support . . . the only [friendly] government that now exists."

George W. Bush criticizing Harry Reid? No—Joe Biden complaining about Trent Lott's slow-walk on the supplemental appropriation for Kosovo in April 2000. Two months earlier, General Wesley Clark, the U.S. commander in that war, told the Senate, "Force readiness could be adversely affected if we do not receive timely passage of the . . . supplemental funding."

Biden and Clark were correct; during the Balkans wars the Army routinely postponed repairs and juggled training schedules while the Clinton administration and the Republican Congress went through a highly choreographed handbag fight over war costs. In those halcyon days, the supplementals averaged about $2 billion per year, less than 1 percent of defense spending. The two 2007 defense supplemental requests will total about $170 billion—not counting the billions of vote-buying pork tacked on by the Democratic congressional leadership—that is, almost 40 percent of the 2007 baseline defense budget request. The Democrats today are sinning on a far larger scale.

At the core of the Democrats' posture over the supplemental appropriations bill is the pretense that a delay won't really affect the soldiers and Marines now fighting or preparing to deploy. Rep. John Murtha, one of the chief architects of the Democrats' supplemental strategy, claims the Army wouldn't be in "dire straits" until June. Indeed, Murtha complains that the Pentagon's warnings of real consequences "gets under my nerves." Separately, he complains to *Time* that the "readiness of the Army's ground forces is as bad as it was right after Vietnam." So which is it?

A delay even of several weeks in resolving the military funding issue for 2007 could have a serious ripple effect introducing a potentially crippling uncertainty into the Iraq "surge."

In fact, the supplemental fight is not just a tempest in a Beltway teapot. A delay even of several weeks in resolving the military funding issue for 2007 could have a serious ripple effect, introducing a potentially crippling uncertainty into the Iraq "surge" effort. Uncle Sam may be a rich man, but his Pentagon lacks liquidity.

About two-thirds of the "baseline" defense budget—what it costs simply to have a military establishment—is spent on personnel and weapons; those are the Pentagon's capital and human investments, and they are very inflexible spending requirements. The remaining third is the "operations and maintenance," or "O&M" account, but even this spending is mostly obligated well in advance. Even worse, it gets spent rapidly. As William Lynn, Pentagon comptroller for most of Clinton's second term, put it, "We have very little control over half of it. It's things like utilities. It's contracts for civilian employees. It's day-care center workers. . . . You can't just say we're not going to pay rent . . . so we can pay" for the war.

Hence, when you go to war, you need a supplemental appropriation. And because war is an unpredictable trade, you need the money as soon as you can get it—wars are not fought one fiscal year at a time. Lynn, who kept the Pentagon books during the Balkans wars, explained, "If you wait until the third or fourth quarter [of the fiscal year] to deal with it"—the third quarter of the 2007 budget year began April 1—"it has an enormous impact on readiness."

And, in fact, the pinch is already being felt in Iraq. Major General William Caldwell, the chief spokesman for U.S. forces in Iraq, reported at a recent press briefing that the training of Iraqi forces had slowed due to lack of funds. "It is starting to have some impact today," he said, "and will only, you know, have more of an impact over time."

The impact would be directly felt by U.S. forces in the late summer, just as the surge is at its height and when its effects would presumably start to be fully felt. The real bill-payers for delays in approving supplemental funding would be those units then preparing to deploy, to sustain whatever momentum the surge generates. As the Joint Chiefs of Staff explained in an April 2 letter to Congress: "Spending restrictions will delay and disrupt our follow-on forces as they prepare for war." They would also "compromis[e] future readiness and strategic agility"—that is, make it tough to respond to any unforeseen crisis.

Finally, these money problems would hit an Army and Marine Corps stretched to their limits by the

Tom Donnelly is resident fellow in defense and national security studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demands of fighting many wars for many years. Soldiers and Marines are now surging on two fronts at once. The services and those who serve in them are far from "broken," as anyone who remembers the post-Vietnam military will affirm, but people in uniform do feel they have been shabbily treated. There is always a distance between soldiers and society, but soldiers tend to see us better than we see them, and we do not fool them when we pander to them with a too-abstract profession of love for "the troops."

The Democrats do not have the votes to override a presidential veto. The American people gave them a small majority to correct the Bush administration's course, and that has happened: We have a new strategy, a new defense secretary, and a new commander in Iraq. The American people did not give the Democrats a mandate to direct the war; that will not happen unless they win the White House in 2008. The Democrats should quickly approve an appropriations bill that President Bush can sign, lest they hurt the ones they say they love. ♦

Hail Mauritania!

An unheralded experiment in Arab democracy.

BY JAMES KIRCHICK

Americans are right to be worried about the prospects for democracy in the Middle East. In Egypt, elections have done little to loosen five-term president Hosni Mubarak's grip on power or to stop his plans for turning power over to his son Gamal upon retirement. Whatever degree of democracy exists in Lebanon is threatened by Syria's not-so-secret meddling, and dour headlines about Iraq fill international newspapers on a daily basis. But now, in a remote corner of the Arab world, an elected government has suddenly bloomed.

On March 25, in the rural, undeveloped, west African nation of Mauritania (population: 3,270,000), Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi, a sometime government minister, defeated rival Ahmed Ould Daddah, a prominent economist, in a runoff election for the presidency. Both sides campaigned vigorously and participated in a live, televised debate. Ould Daddah even had his own website, an impressive feat in a country where agriculture accounts for half of the population's livelihood. Election observers from the European Union, African Union, and Arab League—as well as non-profit civic groups like the U.S. government-funded National Democratic Institute—all praised the process as free and fair. Turnout for preliminary balloting on March 11 was 70 percent, and it remained high at 67 percent for the March 25 runoff. Parliamentary elections and a referendum on the country's new constitution had been held last year. All of these ballots went off without a hitch. Abdallahi was sworn in April 19 and claimed that the peaceful transition to democratic rule makes Mauritania "an undisputable model of a peaceful ending to a monolithic era." Unfortunately, coverage of this noteworthy international development has been scant.

The good news out of Mauritania contrasts starkly with democracy efforts elsewhere on the continent. In Zimbabwe, on the very same day as the Mauritanian general election, President Mugabe unleashed a torrent of violence against peaceful protestors holding a prayer meeting outside the capital city of Harare. This he followed with a nationwide crackdown on the opposition, in which his secret police abducted hundreds of democracy activists from their homes for brutal beatings and interrogations. Zimbabwe watchers may take heart from the fact that Mauritania used to be as turbulent.

From 1984 until 2005, Mauritania was ruled by Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, a military dictator. His government actively discriminated against minority black Africans and black Moors. He survived an attempted coup in 2003, but in August 2005, while he was visiting Saudi Arabia for the funeral of King Fahd, a group of soldiers calling itself the Military Council for Justice and Democracy took control of the government and announced their plans for a democratic transition.

"The armed forces and security forces have unanimously decided to put an end to the totalitarian practices of the deposed regime under which our people have suffered much over the last several years," the coup leaders said in a statement issued upon taking control. The military named Col. Ely Ould Mohamed Vall head of the transition government, promising elections soon. Vall vowed not to run for office himself and barred members of the junta from participating in the election. Mauritanians, given their country's history, had reason to be skeptical. But events over the next two years showed the coup leaders meant what they had said.

Taking shelter in Niger, Ould Taya fulminated against the coup, calling it "senseless," and tried to order the military to restore his premiership. But even his own political party renounced him. The African Union initially suspended Mauritania from the organization and the United States at first condemned the coup, but now both have waxed enthusiastic about the progress Mauritania has made.

Abdallahi, the new president, had served briefly as a minister under Taya, but was later imprisoned on corruption allegations. From 1989 until 2003 he lived in exile in Niger. Nevertheless, opponents seized on his association with the previous dictatorship during the campaign. The tac-

James Kirchick is assistant to the editor-in-chief of the New Republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tic was perhaps inevitable, given that Abdallahi's rival, Ould Daddah, had been a vocal critic of the regime and was imprisoned multiple times for his dissidence. But rather than contest the election and pledge to undermine it—a common tactic among electoral losers in fledgling democracies—Ould Daddah has committed himself to seeing his country's peaceful transition succeed.

As the American journalist James Martin, who was present for the first round of balloting, wrote in the Cairo-based *Al-Ahram Weekly*, "Mauritania's official transition to democracy has given many hope that real reform may now become possible in the largely desert country and that its experiment in democratic rule will serve as an example to the rest of the region." Publicizing the good news out of Mauritania should be an urgent task of the State Department.

The Mauritanians' success—notably, on their own terms and with little foreign intervention—at establishing the basis of a democratic society in a country that formally outlawed slavery only in 1980, should serve as a challenge to those who claim that democracy is bound to fail in the Arab and Muslim world. Now Iraqis and others can look to the west coast of Africa for an example of Arab liberalism in action. ♦

Gunnar Myrdal Was Right

Social Security's fertility problem.

BY JAMES C. CAPRETTA

Barring a political earthquake, President Bush will leave office without achieving his goal of transforming Social Security. That's too bad. A successful Social Security effort would be a significant down payment on much needed entitlement reform. But sooner or later, Social Security will find its way back onto the public agenda. The program's financial problems are simply too big to set aside indefinitely.

In a nutshell, Social Security's long-term prospects are bleak because of rapid and unprecedented population aging. Part of the demographic story is, of course, good news about longer lives. When Social Security started, the average man could expect to live about 12 years after reaching retirement at age 65. Today, he can expect to live 16 years.

But by far the most important factor in aging over the long run is falling fertility. Societies that do not produce children will, quite naturally, grow older. And there is simply no bigger problem than a low birth rate for a conventional "pay-as-you-go" pension system like Social Security. Without a steady stream of "payers," the system cannot "go."

What is not widely understood—despite the work of analysts like Allan Carlson, Phillip Longman, and John Mueller, among others—is that Social Security itself contributes significantly to the problem of low fertility. Odd as it may sound to the modern ear, a primary motivation for having children in earlier times was economic security in old age. As parents became frail and less productive, it was expected that one or more of their adult children would take care of them, oftentimes by bringing them into their homes. Married couples thus "invested" in numerous children, in part, to ensure there would be family members to care for them in their twilight years. With state-run Social Security, the government has largely assumed this family responsibility. Married couples have a greatly diminished economic incentive to have children, because now they are counting on—and paying for—government-based old age support.

This insight is neither new nor conceived of by conservative opponents of the welfare state. As noted frequently by Carlson, Gunnar Myrdal, the eminent Swedish socialist economist, observed in the 1940s that state-run, pay-as-you-go pension systems are built on a fundamental "contradiction": They reduce the economic incentive within a family to have children, even as they remain ever dependent on a new generation of productive workers.

The evidence for Social Security's role in fertility decline is compelling and has been confirmed by numerous researchers. A 2005 study by economists Michele Boldrin, Mariacristina De Nardi, and Larry Jones found that a government-run pension system equal to 10 percent of a country's economy correlates with a reduction in the Total Fertility Rate (TFR)—which measures the average number of births per woman during her lifetime—of between 0.7 and 1.6 children, after controlling for other variables (no one suggests government pensions are

James C. Capretta, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, was an associate director at the Office of Management and Budget from 2001 to 2004.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the only reason fertility has dropped). This is extraordinary given that most industrialized countries now have TFRs well below 2.0. Importantly, this research indicates that program size matters. The bigger the Social Security scheme, the steeper the fertility decline.

Japan, now the world's oldest society, presents a striking case study. Government spending on Japan's state-run pension system increased dramatically in recent decades, from about 1.3 percent of national income in 1965 to more than 12 percent today. During this same period, Japan's TFR fell from about 2.0 to 1.3. The economic consequences of this plunging birth rate will be severe in the years ahead, as the workforce contracts significantly. Japan's working age population—those ages 20 to 64—is expected to decline from 79 million in 2000 to just under 50 million in 2050, a 37 percent drop. With a smaller workforce expected, Japan has been forced to reform its Social Security program three times since 1994 and has scheduled a 0.354 percentage point payroll tax rate hike every year between 2004 and 2017—increasing the tax from 13.6 percent of wages to 18.3 percent. The evidence suggests that this tax increase will only serve to further suppress the one variable that could eventually bring Japan back from the brink—more children and, therefore, more future workers.

The pattern is similar, if not as dramatic, throughout the developed world, including in the United States. The Total Fertility Rate fell precipitously as Social Security expanded in size, from a high of 3.5 in 1955 to a low of 1.8 in 1975. It has since recovered slightly to 2.0. Today, France has a TFR of 1.9, the U.K. is at 1.6, and Germany, Italy, and Canada all have TFRs below 1.4.

The crucial role that fertility plays in pay-as-you-go systems is evident in the future projections for Social Security. Current mid-range estimates assume the U.S. TFR will remain at 2.0 indefinitely, but the resulting modest growth in the U.S. workforce is insufficient to keep up with the ever-growing number of retirees. By 2080, the ratio of the working age population to the elderly will be just 2.4 to 1, down from 4.9 today. A gap between Social Security spending and tax collections is expected to open up beginning in 2017 and widen substantially in the ensuing years, reaching about 1.8 percent of GDP in 2080.

But the future of the U.S. fertility rate is not set in stone, and further improvement would greatly ease the financial strain. A steady rise in the TFR to 2.8—last seen around 1965—would eliminate about one-half of the projected financial shortfall in the Social Security program over a 75-year period. On the other hand, a fall in the U.S. TFR to the levels found in most of Europe would open a much wider gap in Social Security's finances and precipitate an even deeper crisis in the program.

Acknowledgment of Social Security's role in fertility decline is not an argument for abandoning government-sponsored old age support. The elderly—and their adult children—far prefer financial independence to dependence, and Social Security provides important protection against destitution, a common problem in earlier eras for the elderly with no family support. But reformers must understand the population contradiction at the heart of Social Security if they are to think clearly about the future of the system.

The starting point for a sensible reform of Social Security should be opposition to any proposal that would increase the program's current size—including proposals to initiate personal savings accounts with "add-on" contributions. The current Social Security payroll tax rate and wage base—12.4 percent of wages up to $97,500 in 2007—should be ceilings (the taxable wage limit is already indexed to increase with average wage growth each year). The temptation among some Republicans to accept a tax hike to get a bipartisan Social Security deal should be resisted; it would only lead to further pressure on the birth rate. Social Security's financing gap will need to be closed with benefit adjustments, such as increases in the retirement age and reductions in the benefit formula for higher wage earners.

But reform should not stop there. Today, two workers with identical wage histories pay the same contributions and get the same retirement benefits, even if one of them has numerous children—with all of the expense that entails—and the other has none. That's not fair or prudent, as it undervalues the program's need for investment in human capital. Longman, Carlson, and others have suggested reforms that would begin to correct this flawed accounting. These proposals would give workers who are raising a family either a payroll or income tax break or a boost in their retirement benefit to compensate for the costs of investing in future taxpayers.

The point for conservatives is that any discussion of fixing Social Security should properly focus on strengthening young families, which will be both more popular with voters and better policy than approaches that ignore the fertility problem. Placing the cost of any reform within Social Security—a child credit that lowers the payroll tax, for instance—will also ensure there is no increase in the program's unfunded liabilities, as any added costs would have to be offset with benefit reductions, which should also boost fertility. Incorporating automatic, ongoing adjustments in the benefit formula over time, based on actual changes in fertility (as well as longevity), could help sell the reform in Congress. Proponents could then argue that benefits would automatically increase if the fertility rate improves as hoped.

No one should be under any illusion, however. Reversing the long-term slide toward smaller families will take more than a creative Social Security plan. My Ethics and Public Policy Center colleague John Mueller has noted that higher fertility accompanies more frequent religious practice, for instance. Clearly there are powerful social trends at work that can only be addressed with cultural renewal. But Social Security is contributing to the problem, and its reform should be part of the solution. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Le Showdown

The French presidential election is down to its last two-and-a-half candidates

By Christopher Caldwell

Paris

In March, in a pizza parlor near the Boulevard St-Germain, an American journalist suggested to the sociologist Louis Chauvel, author of a bestselling book about the decline of the French middle class, that French voters often seemed not to know their own best interests. "You will never understand anything about French politics," Chauvel interrupted, "if you try to understand it rationally."

The first round of France's presidential elections, held April 22, proved him right. Out of a dozen candidates, two now move to the second round, slated for May 6. The brash former interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy took 31 percent of the vote. Ségolène Royal, the beautiful common-law wife of the Socialist party chairman, who rose out of her party's second tier to prove herself a politician of uncanny charisma, was just behind him at 26. Going into this election, polls showed 70 percent of French people thought their country was in decline. Forty percent professed to be undecided just days before the election.

But they didn't behave that way. Eighty-five percent of the public showed up to vote, the highest tally in a first round since 1965. Interview shows with the major candidates throughout the campaign could draw a sixth of the country to their television sets. Extremists seemed to be the big losers. The fascistic National Front of Jean-Marie Le Pen suffered its first major reverse in two decades, falling to 10 percent. The French Communist party, once a European powerhouse, finished seventh, pulling in a microscopic 2 percent of the vote. French editorialists are confidently writing the obituary of both, explaining their survival as somehow linked to outgoing president Jacques Chirac, a holdover of the Cold War. But it is not that simple.

The French system of presidential elections is similar to the one Louisiana still uses in many of its elections. The first round is open to all comers, provided they can gather enough signatures from the country's mayors. The top two face off against one another, no matter what their tallies are. This system produces perversities. In the last presidential elections in 2002, the hard left—antiglobalist, Trotskyite, and otherwise—was so energized that it drew votes away from the Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin, with the result that not Jospin but Le Pen made it into the second round. This enabled Chirac, who in those pre-Iraq days had rock-bottom approval ratings, to win re-election in the second round with 82 percent of the vote.

This year's perversity is somewhat different. It is that Ségolène Royal, after a bold start to her campaign, fell into such a slough of incompetence that she drew an opportunistic alternative candidate into the race: François Bayrou, a marginal politician of the center right, with no platform and no program. He won 18 percent of the vote, not enough to advance to the second round but enough for him to claim (whether credibly or delusionally) a role as power broker. Drawn into the campaign by the widespread impression that Royal was unfit to be president, he may wind up making her president.

Little rascals

The election was, as virtually all the candidates admitted, a referendum on whether the French wanted to be ruled by Nicolas Sarkozy, probably the most gifted European politician of his generation and certainly the most polarizing. A lot of French voters were comfortable with the idea. The 11 million votes Sarkozy received were a record for first round candidates. In fact, he got more votes than the top two candidates of 2002 combined. A onetime protégé of Chirac who has become a bitter rival, Sarkozy describes himself as a "man of the right"—but his campaign was a Nixonian mix of tough-on-crime rhetoric (he plans to introduce minimum sentences into the French criminal justice system) and programs of the left (such as affirmative action).

This left-wing side to Sarkozy allowed him to pay homage to his opponents while throwing them off-balance, and to bolster his claims to represent *all* Frenchmen. Thus, while he was the only candidate with a serious plan to shrink the French state, he planned to do so by natural

Christopher Caldwell is a senior editor at The Weekly Standard.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

attrition, filling only half the spots that opened up due to retirements. He talked about the "moralization of investment capitalism" (a favorite trope of the antiglobalists), opined that France should have been more protectionist towards its steel industry in recent decades, and promised *Le Monde* that his very first act as president would be to convene a conference to guarantee salary equality between men and women.

The 50th anniversary of the European Union fell in the middle of the campaign, and papers were filled with articles that were banal, pompous, and sad. In a country that had derailed the E.U. by resoundingly rejecting its constitution in a referendum in 2005, Sarkozy was the most committed Euro-skeptic, a leftish position in France. Sarkozy called proposals for another referendum "madness." He was less interested in Europe than in France.

And Frenchness. Sarkozy suggested that, as president, he would establish a department of "immigration and national identity." Sarkozy's own advisers were divided about the idea. The historian Pierre Nora made the best case against it, saying that to link immigration and national identity was "either a tactic, a misunderstanding, or a short-sighted idea, because the shaking of national identity is not just a matter of immigration—far from it." (Nora argued that what had most decisively altered France's identity was *peace.*) Strong majorities—55 percent in one *Figaro* poll—were thrilled by Sarkozy's idea.

Sarkozy's ability to harness the identity issue was central to the removal—perhaps the permanent removal—of the extreme right from French politics. The National Front had trouble figuring out who its friends and enemies were, and descended into unintentional slapstick. It actively sought the support of the half-Cameroonian, Israel-hating comedian Dieudonné, who had run as the candidate of a small group called Europalestine in the last European elections. Dieudonné announced that he would give his vote to whoever had the most credible position on the fate of Cameroon's inland pygmy tribes. At the height of this campaign, Dieudonné appeared at a public function with Jean-Marie Le Pen's wife Jany (who had led a group called SOS Children of Iraq during the anti-Saddam U.N. embargo) to press the pygmy cause.

The 20 days of rioting in the autumn of 2005 were, of course, the main shadow hanging over the election. This spring there was a minor riot in the Gare du Nord—a major train and subway hub in Paris—and André Gerin, the Communist mayor of the historically violent suburb of Vénissieux, published a book in which he claimed to discern "the seeds of civil war." Sarkozy's opponents sought to use his directness on the subject of suburban disorder to wrap him in Le Pen's mantle. In October 2005, Sarkozy had used the word *"racaille"* to describe suburban criminals, and it became the rallying cry of all who stood against him. It is often mistranslated in English as "scum"—which does convey the way Sarkozy's more paranoid opponents seek to depict him: as a kind of Nazi keen to dehumanize his fellow citizens. But almost certainly Sarkozy was trying to do the very opposite. *Racaille* means "riff-raff" or "rabble" or "mob." It is not a flattering word but it is not a dehumanizing one, either—its effect is to belittle the political import of the rioters. It is derived from the same word (*rascaille*) from which we get our own word "rascal." At a time when some French people were muttering about Muslims and dark-skinned foreigners, *racaille* was a relatively level-headed thing to say.

François Bayrou made hay of Sarkozy's unpopularity in high-crime neighborhoods. "He hasn't been able to go there for months, despite all the guards he has around him. Do you think it's a healthy sign in a country like ours when the minister of the interior himself can't go to the suburbs?" You could also ask whether it is a healthy sign when presidential candidates offer criminals a veto on the country's crime policy.

Grecian formula

There is a famous confrontation from the 1974 presidential campaign that conservative Frenchmen like to quote. During a debate in which François Mitterrand consistently tried to pass off his coalition of Socialists and Communists as somehow more generous than its rivals, his opponent, conservative Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, replied, "Monsieur Mitterrand, you don't have a monopoly of the heart." Giscard won.

The genius of Ségolène Royal, who continues to be vastly underrated as a candidate, has been to pull a Giscard in reverse. Born in West Africa to a colonial military officer, she set out to show that the right does not have a monopoly of order. In so doing, she has brought about a sea-change in her party. This change has been long brewing. In October 2004, stung by the way France's crime problem had been used against them in the 2002 elections, the Socialists met to chart a course for the next ones. One roundtable discussion addressed the party's dependence on the ideology of 1968, particularly on matters of crime and family life. "Without being a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary," wrote the Socialist aide Laurent Baumel at the time, "one can safely assert that the new personal liberties that the men and women of the '1968 generation' enjoyed, the chances they got to escape more traditional family models, did not have wholly positive effects on their children's identity and adjustment."

Royal was flexible enough to manipulate these fam-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There are 193 countries in the world.
None of them are energy independent.

So who's holding whom over a barrel?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The fact is, the vast majority of countries rely on the few energy-producing nations that won the geological lottery, blessing them with abundant hydrocarbons. And yet, even regions with plenty of raw resources import some form of energy. Saudi Arabia, for example, the world's largest oil exporter, imports refined petroleum products like gasoline.

So if energy independence is an unrealistic goal, how does everyone get the fuel they need, especially in a world of rising demand, supply disruptions, natural disasters, and unstable regimes?

True global energy security will be a result of cooperation and engagement, not isolationism. When investment and expertise are allowed to flow freely across borders, the engine of innovation is ignited, prosperity is fueled and the energy available to everyone increases. At the same time, balancing the needs of producers and consumers is as crucial as increasing supply and curbing demand. Only then will the world enjoy energy peace-of-mind.

Succeeding in securing energy for everyone doesn't have to come at the expense of anyone. Once we all start to think differently about energy, then we can truly make this promise a reality.

CHEVRON is a registered trademark of Chevron Corporation. The CHEVRON HALLMARK and HUMAN ENERGY are trademarks of Chevron Corporation. ©2006 Chevron Corporation. All rights reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ily values to defeat party rivals Dominique Strauss-Kahn and Laurent Fabius, two vastly more experienced, considerably more mainstream, and much better organized politicians. Royal is not married, but she and her partner, Socialist party chairman François Hollande, have four children. She insisted she didn't want young girls pressured into wearing racy underwear—which must happen a lot because it struck a chord. She said she wanted to "draw inspiration" from the way Tony Blair treated business as a partner for the left, not an adversary. She criticized the effects of the *réduction du temps de travail*—a strictly enforced limitation of the work week to 35 hours that was the signature domestic-policy initiative of the Jospin government. On one subject after another, she was like Bill Clinton attacking Sister Souljah's violent rap lyrics, declaring her independence from the unions and other interest groups whose embrace, however loving, had robbed her party of its mobility. And she wrapped that talk, unusual for a French socialist, in a feminist rhetoric, calling it an assertion of her "*liberté*" as a woman.

Ségolène Royal

Photos by AFP / Getty Images / Feferberg-Coex

Some of her ideas were populist and even dangerous. Her instinct is to distrust forms, to prefer "real" democracy to "bourgeois" democracy. From a book by the political philosopher Pierre Rosanvallon she borrowed an idea of "citizen juries," suggesting that elected officials be subjected to "*surveillance populaire*" by vaguely defined panels of randomly selected citizens. . . . By surveillance she meant what we would call oversight, but the English sense of "surveillance" was never far off. On cold reflection, this attempt to make democracy more "real" is deeply undemocratic—if our elective representatives are subject to veto, then we don't really have elected rulers. But there was not much cold reflection in the dazzling light of the nomination battle, and 59 percent of the public backed her plan.

For a time. Once the frenzy of the nominating campaign was over, Royal proved a candidate so weak as to horrify the Socialist rank and file. For a politician who speaks so often about listening to ordinary people, she is authoritarian in private, according to Eric Besson, a snubbed top aide who gave a bestselling book-length interview this spring before defecting to the Sarkozy camp. She does not have an intellect of the very top caliber and she is not built for the unglamorous, reflective business of organizing, course-setting, and administration. In a way that will remind Americans of their own president, she misspeaks almost constantly. A practical joker got her cell phone number and tricked her into endorsing the independence of Quebec. On a trip to China, she told an official that France could learn a lot from China's speedy justice system. Meaning to attack one of her detractors for his misplaced wit (*esprit*), she accused him of *spiritualité* (spirituality). People understood what she meant, but it was like calling Greeks "Grecians."

And what is more, after having "stood up to" her party's interest groups, Royal, in the sober light of dawn, may have realized that Strauss-Kahn and Fabius knew something she didn't. The shrinking of her party's base, and of the left in general, meant that the Socialists could not win the presidency without the support of every last special pleader in the country. At this point, she began to grovel, and it was an undignified spectacle. It was as if, two months before the presidential election in 1992, Bill Clinton had suddenly said, "Oh, gosh! I must have sounded awfully harsh on poor Sister Souljah last June! What a terrible mistake! I'm sorry!" She forgot the nice things she had said about Tony Blair. She accused the police of overreacting to the riot at the Gare du Nord. She attacked the head of Medef, the French businessmen's federation, for making much the same criticisms she herself had made of the 35-hour work week. Eventually, a combination of her misstatements and her equivocations opened the possibility that there might not be a Socialist in the second round at all, and that the presidency might be there for the taking by an ambitious person. Such as, for instance, François Bayrou.

But even if the magic always wears off, Royal remains a magical politician. She is, like Clinton or Germany's Gerhard Schröder, an instinctual animal of democracy—oriented around campaigning, not governing. The less she reasons, the better she does at it, creating opportunity after opportunity through ingenious demagogic improvisations. And that is what she is now doing with Bayrou.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Enemy of promise

Until he threw his hat into the ring of the presidential campaign last December, François Bayrou was known to the French public for three things. First, as minister of education in the mid-1990s, he presided over a doomed attempt at a kind of school voucher system. Second, in 2002, when Jacques Chirac united the entire French center-right into the UMP party (now led by Sarkozy), Bayrou led a rump of the UDF (the Giscard d'Estaing party) that stayed out. Although the UDF has been referred to as "the center" since Bayrou interposed himself in the campaign, his party has never been distinguishable from the UMP and has no real ideological reason to exist. Until this spring, it had the same goal as the Free Democratic party in Germany—to command enough of a base to shake down any narrowly elected government for a couple of ministerial posts. Third, Bayrou had the most outsize ego in modern French politics. According to an election-season profile in *Le Monde*, he replied "My virility," when asked what his wife liked best about him. "One of these days, he will explode from vanity," Jacques Chirac, an expert in such matters, once said.

Nicolas Sarkozy

Rather ingeniously, Bayrou defined the main problem in French political life as broken promises and proposed to address that problem by making no promises himself. So he had no electoral platform. This left him in a position of running as the candidate of "change" against two candidates who, whatever their flaws, would change the country more than he would. As an aide to Sarkozy told *Le Monde*, quite correctly, "Monsieur Bayrou proposes only that the president come not from the Socialist party or the UMP but from the UDF. Some break with the past!"

There was, however, a need for such a candidate, particularly among Paris's bourgeois-bohemians, or *bobos*, as they are called. (That word, coined by David Brooks, is The Weekly Standard's gift to the language of Montaigne. See *Le Grand Robert de la Langue Française*, vol. I, p. 1492.) Bayrou is the candidate of the 18 percent of voters who were at once too politically correct to vote for Sarkozy and too intellectually proud to vote for Royal. But casting a vote for Bayrou turns out to have been like filing for an extension on one's taxes. Now, Sarkozy and Royal are the only two candidates left in the race, and they will have to choose. Since Sarkozy will get most of the votes of the National Front (10 percent), and Royal will get all of the votes of the hard left (7 percent), the election will be decided by who gets the votes of Bayrou's 18 percent. Bayrou said he would not endorse anyone. But, having said that "Nicolas Sarkozy, through his closeness to the business world and media powers, through his taste for intimidation and threats, will concentrate powers like never before," he didn't have to.

Polls show Bayrou's voters leaning Royal's way—by 35-to-25 or 45-to-39—although Royal will need a more decisive majority than that to carry the day. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the 1968 student leader once known as Danny the Red, joined the Royal camp after his fellow Greens were demolished with barely 1 percent of the vote, and warned that the battle was uphill. "We have to avoid getting locked in the traditional right-left debate," he said. "If we do, Sarkozy has won." Sarkozy has networked and picked up the endorsement of most UDF politicians.

But in the days right after the election, Royal pulled a move of inspired, illuminated, almost diabolical brilliance. She decided to appeal, in a womanly way, to the purring megalomania of Bayrou, by telling him, in effect, "Oh, you weren't *really* eliminated, *mon p'tit chou* . . . " She challenged him to a "debate," which was scheduled to take place on the afternoon of Saturday, April 28 (the day after this article is printed). It is always possible that this debate may backfire. It may leave Royal with a choice between attacking Bayrou and appearing sycophantic and unpresidential. Sarkozy may turn it to her disadvantage when he and Royal meet for the "real" debate on May 2.

But what is "real," anyway? Engaging with the man whose voters she needs is a bold move. It is the break in French politics she has always spoken of. It is a promise kept. Bayrou's ego and Royal's antidemocratic ideas of "authentic" democracy—that what happens at the ballot box is less important than what happens on the television screen—have led the two to collude in the pleasing fantasy that the first round of the election did not happen, and in the dangerous principle that a democratic verdict can be safely ignored. In a week, we'll see if they are right. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tooting the Horn of Pawlenty

Meet the first Sam's Club Republican

By Matthew Continetti

The most important speech at the 2007 Conservative Political Action Conference, held in early March at a Washington hotel, didn't come from any of the Republicans running for president. It came from Minnesota governor Tim Pawlenty, one of the few Republican success stories in 2006—he was reelected with 47 percent of the vote—and a rising star in a party that's been knocked back on its heels.

Pawlenty spoke in the middle of the afternoon on the last day of the three-day event, hours before former House Speaker Newt Gingrich would address a standing-room-only crowd. The audience that listened to Pawlenty's panel was modest in size, listless, and easily distracted. The subject was how the GOP can win back the votes of suburban and exurban voters. When Pawlenty said, "I support school choice," the crowd applauded wanly. Then it was silent. Conservative boilerplate wasn't going to rouse it from its stupor.

And Pawlenty said, "But that ain't enough."

A few kids in blue blazers raised an eyebrow.

And Pawlenty said, "I want to push you a little bit. Indulge me."

Two older conservatives exchanged looks.

And before you knew it Pawlenty took off, arguing for reimportation of prescription drugs from Canada and Mexico, for increased government subsidies for alternative energy, for more health insurance coverage, and for using government to cater to the needs of down-scale voters. At times the crowd was confused; at other times it seemed annoyed. Here was this tall, bird-like young man—Pawlenty is 46—taking on standard conservative public policy prescriptions and saying they were lacking. He was saying they weren't enough to return the GOP to majority status. Besides, the issues on which Pawlenty focused—education, health care, energy—sounded a little . . . Democratic, especially at a wingnut gathering such as this.

A funny thing happened, however. Once he had his audience, Pawlenty never lost them. In fact, he won some of them over. Towards the end of the talk, when Pawlenty said the United States was "funding both sides of the war on terror. We're funding our side, and we're funding their side by buying oil," he got a standing ovation. After the speech Pawlenty mingled in a hallway outside the hotel ballroom. The reaction was positive. People kept coming up to him, shaking his hand.

"These trainers always come in and say, 'Hey, if you want to win over a crowd, just tell them what they want to hear. Don't try to convince them or persuade them. What they really want is to be affirmed. And you'll be—in their minds—you'll be more well liked if you just tell them what they want to hear,'" Pawlenty said later. "I don't enjoy that because you become kind of a . . . mercenary. So I tried to—and I enjoy trying to—at least appropriately and gently and constructively try to get people to *think* a little bit. And so I don't want to go, you know, in your face, but at least be . . . constructively provocative, and maybe get some of them to have a light go on and say, 'Well, maybe that's worth thinking about.'

"Otherwise you just come in and do the Milton Friedman playbook and the other social and economic side of it—I can do that, I believe in that stuff *strongly*—but they've been hearing that for four days and, you know, I also look to put a little something new on it."

A little something new. . . . It was back in 2002 that Pawlenty first said the GOP needed "to be the party of Sam's Club, not just the country club." Back then his embrace of his state and regional populist tradition was a curiosity, a political epiphenomenon lost in a national sea of regnant Bush Republicanism. Today Bush Republicanism is on its way out. The most successful GOP governors—Arnold Schwarzenegger in California, Rick Perry in Texas, Charlie Crist in Florida, and former governor Mitt Romney in Massachusetts—like their conservatism *à la carte*. They emphasize certain conserva-

Matthew Continetti is associate editor at The Weekly Standard.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

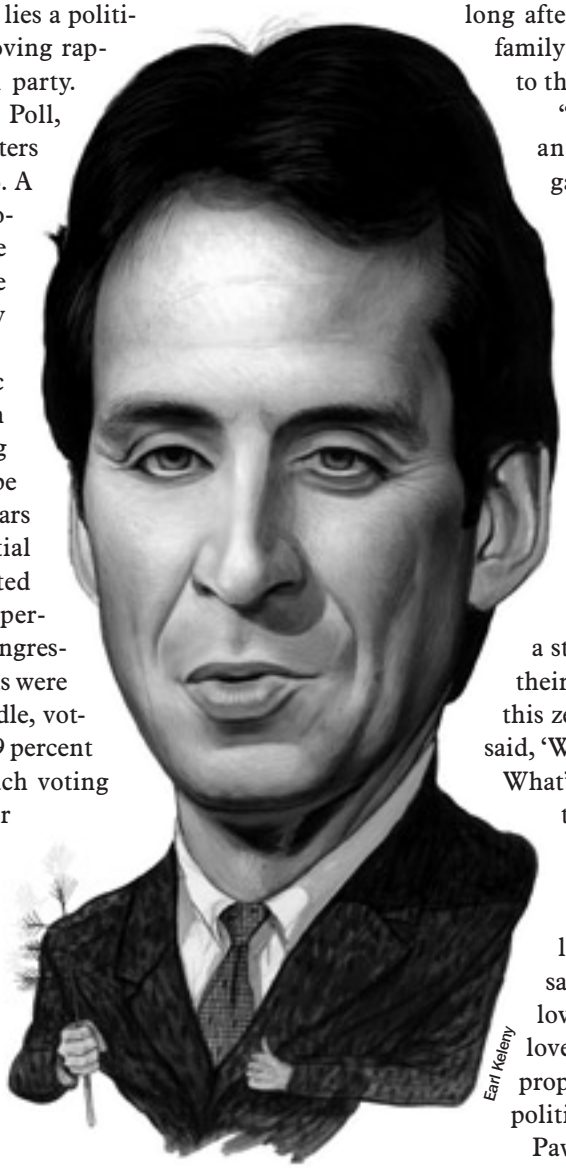
tive policies—low taxes most of all—but dismiss others. Meanwhile, in Washington policy circles, wonks and flacks are busy sketching out an alternative Republican agenda that combines social conservatism with an active government tailoring economic policies to help working families. Pawlenty's slogan—"The party of Sam's Club"—is the working title on a forthcoming book from Doubleday by WEEKLY STANDARD contributors Ross Douthat and Reihan Salam.

Behind all this new thinking lies a political reality. Independents are moving rapidly away from the Republican party. According to the National Exit Poll, Republicans lost independent voters by a staggering 18 points in 2006. A recent Pew survey reveals Democrats have a 15-point advantage over Republicans when voters are asked the party with which they identify.

Nowhere is the Democratic advantage more clear than with voters 18 to 29 years old. Voting patterns among this cohort shape the political environment for years to come. In the 1984 presidential election, 18- to 29-year-olds voted 40 percent Democratic and 59 percent Republican. In the 1986 congressional election, 18- to 29-year-olds were pretty much split down the middle, voting 51 percent Democratic and 49 percent Republican. One could argue such voting patterns helped set the stage for conservative governance.

After more than a decade of mirroring general electoral trends, however, the youth vote has veered left. In 2004, 18- to 29-year-olds went Democratic 54 percent to 45 percent. In the 2006 congressional elections, these voters went Democratic 60 percent to 38 percent, making them one of the most Democratic groups in the country—voting for the donkey at about the same levels as union members. If this youthful cohort continues to vote in similar ways as it grows older, the GOP is in serious trouble.

It is out of such a climate that politicians like Tim Pawlenty emerge.



Tim Pawlenty

At first the South St. Paul native wanted to be a dentist. He would be walking down the street and see the local teeth-cleaner—Dr. Vogel—driving his Buick Riviera, parking it in a reserved spot, and would think, *Wow! This is awesome.* To practice dentistry—to make money as a professional—was to enhance one's status. It was also a way to transcend difficult circumstances. Pawlenty's mother died when he was 16. His father was a truck driver who lost his job not long after her passing. Pawlenty was his family's first college graduate. He went to the University of Minnesota.

"I went to college pre-dentistry and got into organic and inorganic chemistry," he says. "And back then you had to get pretty close to a straight-A average to get into dental school, and I think I got a B- or something in either organic or inorganic chemistry, and I was discouraged and going through—you know—pretty much soul-searching as a 19- or 20-year-old kid, and I went to see a career counselor at the U—who happened to be some graduate student who I'm sure they gave a stipend to be a career counselor in their free time—and it was, you know, this zen-like thing in his office, and he said, 'What do you love to do, you know? What's your passion? What do you like to do, what books do you read on vacation?'

" . . . Long story short, I just told him I like current events, I like history, public policy. And he said, 'Well, go into something you love and do well, and whatever you love is what you'll do well in.' So that propelled me to go start taking some political science classes."

Pawlenty worked with the College Republicans and switched his major to political science. It wasn't long before he realized he probably wouldn't be able to find a job with a bachelor's in polisci: *Holy cow, I'm going to be unemployed! I'm going to be selling hot dogs on a street corner over here if I don't get a graduate degree.* So he went to law school—"Not because I had some innate love of the law. . . . I wanted to get a degree and wanted to get a job." He interned with a local

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

state senator, practiced law, and was elected to the state house in 1992.

It's impossible to review Pawlenty's career in politics without mentioning Republican Norm Coleman, now the senior senator from Minnesota. Time after time Coleman's political decisions directly affected Pawlenty's electoral fortunes. "Norm Coleman is a very gifted senator and wonderful senator and a friend, he was a pretty well-known Minnesota political figure because he had been [the Democratic] mayor of St. Paul, dynamic, well-connected, well-financed," Pawlenty says. It all started when Pawlenty wanted to run for governor in 1998 but the decks were cleared for Mayor Coleman, who had switched parties and had an institutional advantage. Pawlenty deferred to Coleman, who went on to lose to Reform party candidate Jesse "The Body/The Mind" Ventura in a close race.

In 1999 Pawlenty was elected majority leader of the Minnesota House of Representatives. The Republicans had a one-vote majority, the Democrats held the senate, and Ventura was governor. Pawlenty was young and untested. "His colleagues saw something in him," says Minneapolis attorney Scott Johnson, one of the *Powerline* bloggers. "Tim held that majority together, which is so hard to do."

Johnson recalls meeting Pawlenty in 2000, at a lunch with some Republican lawyer friends. "I couldn't believe what a talented guy he was," Johnson says. "There's nobody he can't talk to. He's impossible to dislike. And that's such a rare commodity on the Republican side."

Hosting the Republican convention guarantees Pawlenty a place on the national stage, if he's not already on the stage, that is. In Washington, he's frequently mentioned as a possible vice presidential nominee.

Pawlenty was thinking of running for the U.S. Senate against Democrat Paul Wellstone, who was up for reelection in 2002. Coleman was planning to run for governor once again. But the White House thought Coleman would be a stronger Senate candidate than Pawlenty. Coleman decided to follow advice from Washington and move into the Senate race. Pawlenty started receiving phone calls from national Republicans urging him to step aside for Coleman—again. "For a number of days leading up to that there was a whole series of calls saying, 'Look, nobody knows who you are, you don't have any money,'" Pawlenty says, breaking out into a hiccupy laugh. "'Norm's going to get the endorsement, and you're just chasing the wind.'" Pawlenty didn't know what to do. Then one day a call came from Dick Cheney telling him to move aside. "That was kind of the icing on the cake."

Pawlenty won a contested Republican gubernatorial primary and scraped by in the general election, winning 44 percent of the vote. It was a close election in a Republican year, both nationally and in Minnesota. Coleman won the Senate seat (he ran ahead of Pawlenty, taking 50 percent of the vote), and Republicans increased their majority in the state house.

Pawlenty's first task on assuming office was to confront the state's $4.2 billion budget deficit. The newly elected governor had promised to erase the deficit without raising taxes. He did so. And he kept busy. He signed a law requiring a waiting period for abortions and another allowing permit-holders to carry concealed firearms. He threw out the state's lax education requirements and passed new, tougher standards. He won passage of a drug reimportation bill. He poured resources into alternative energy—one of his favorite subjects and proudest accomplishments. He talks with rare interest about biodiesel and cellulosic ethanol and wind power. "Under my watch we've doubled the proposed requirements for ethanol in gasoline here," he says. "We implemented the first in the nation biodiesel requirement in our diesel fuel, 2 percent soy oil. We're one of the nation's leaders in wind energy production. And it's largely part of some tax credits we put into law on my watch as governor."

The second half of his first term had its disappointments. Democrats gained in statewide elections in 2004 and the state confronted another budget crunch. In 2005 the state was on the edge of a government shutdown. Then it leapt off the edge. "And those were very difficult negotiations," Pawlenty says.

The shutdown lasted eight days. "That was very difficult, very contentious," Pawlenty goes on. "And the decision to do that, stare down, was tough. We ended up getting it resolved, making some compromises. Looking over the abyss into a government shutdown—that was a challenge." Pawlenty vetoed some Democratic tax bills, but agreed to raise the state cigarette tax. This lost him some friends on the right.

Not enough to prevent his reelection, however. Pawlenty is beginning his second term eager to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strengthen his education reforms, pour more money into alternative energy subsidies, and try to recover what was lost of his antitax reputation by combating the state Democratic majority's efforts to raise taxes. Meanwhile, Pawlenty must prepare for the 2008 Republican National Convention, which will be held next summer in the Twin Cities. Pawlenty says former Republican National Committee chairman Ken Mehlman was instrumental in bringing the convention to Minnesota—the electoral votes of which, along with those of other states in the Upper Midwest like Wisconsin and Michigan, have long been a target of the national GOP. Hosting the Republican convention guarantees Pawlenty a place on the national stage as the presidential race moves into its final months.

If he's not already on the national stage, that is. In Washington, Pawlenty is frequently mentioned as a possible vice presidential nominee. Earlier this year he took his first step into national politics by endorsing John McCain's candidacy for the Republican nomination for president.

Pawlenty met McCain some 20 years ago. McCain was campaigning in Minnesota and Pawlenty was his driver. He calls McCain "one of the most courageous public leaders the country has seen in modern history." Then he starts gushing. "Now, I don't always agree with him on everything," Pawlenty says. "I know that's the way it is for people who have been in office for a number of years. I just think he is a person of remarkable, extraordinary courage, character, and conviction.

"And if you look at what it takes to move the country forward. . . . You need those traits. You need the ability of somebody who can bring the country together and try to help bridge this polarization. We need from a Republican standpoint someone who can appeal to independents if we're going to win the election, so I think he has a ton of attributes and assets that I think would be very important for the country and for the Republican party.

"And lastly, if you look at the brilliance of Reagan and Teddy Roosevelt and Lincoln, prominent Republican presidents, in addition to courage, character, and conviction, they were willing to take some risks. . . . They weren't status quo people. They were change agents. They were populists—with conservative credentials.

"I think McCain is in that lineage. I think he's clearly in that lineage. Now again, I know he's ruffled the feathers of conservatives on this issue or that issue, but he clearly is in a broad and fair definition of being conservative, in absolute terms—and in relative terms, I would argue he's *at least* as conservative if not *more* conservative than the other leading candidates in the party."

Ask Pawlenty about the possibility of a place on the GOP ticket, and he says he isn't thinking about it. Really.

It's 10:25 A.M. at the Bert Raney elementary school in Granite Falls, Minnesota, and Tim Pawlenty is dressed for gym class. He's wearing a long-sleeved T-shirt and tennis shoes and is about to play wall ball with a bunch of kids in the second and third grades. Pawlenty just spent a half hour reading to first graders, but you could tell the whole time he couldn't wait for gym. It's easy to see why: Wall ball looks like a fun game. There are four electronic pads with targets attached to the wall at one end of the gym. The kids are split into four teams at the other end. Once the clock starts you have to sprint toward your team's pad, throw your ball, and hope to hit a target. If you hit the target you score points. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins. The targets make a whole bunch of funky electronic noises when hit. Wall ball is an ingenious game, says the gym teacher. The kids are so focused on throwing the ball at the pad, they don't realize they are also doing long sprints. It tires the rugrats out.

The wall ball game highlights two facts about Pawlenty. First, he is athletic. In 2005 he ran the Twin Cities Marathon in 3 hours and 43 minutes—an improvement over the 3 hours and 59 minutes it took him to finish in 2004. Growing up, Pawlenty played hockey. He is still a rabid NHL fan. The first website he visits each morning is *hockeyfights.com*, which shows combat highlights from the previous night's games. He plays the ESPN hockey video game in his spare time, often taking on one of his two daughters. This love of competition manifests itself even playing wall ball with second- and third-graders. Pawlenty throws himself into the game, scoring a lot of points but never letting his team get too far ahead of the others.

Second, Pawlenty embodies the concept known as Minnesota Nice. Minnesotans are impeccably polite. They always seem to be smiling. They seem shorn of arrogance. They avoid conflict. How these people elected Jesse Ventura governor is a mystery. Playing wall ball, Pawlenty lets the kids take the lead and congratulates the members of other teams when they hit a hard-to-reach target. Someone jokes that if Ventura were here he would tackle the kids and use the reporters as human javelins with which to pierce the wall pads.

The thing about Minnesota Nice is that it can blind outsiders to the strong convictions that motivate Minnesotans, the politicians in particular. Hubert Humphrey was nice, but he was also remarkably effective. The late Democratic senator Paul Wellstone was nice, but he was also the subject of bipartisan admiration because he refused to betray his ideals. Of course, what such notable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political figures from the Upper Midwest have in common is their progressivism. They are all men of the left. The new crop of young, promising politicians from the Upper Midwest, however, tend to be men of the right—men like Pawlenty, Coleman, Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, and Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin.

The source of Pawlenty's energy is his frustration at the contemporary GOP. He becomes most passionate when he discusses Sam's Club Republicanism—a theory of politics he's done more than anyone else to put into action. (Pawlenty shops frequently at Wal-Mart, incidentally. He and his brother recently bought storage racks for his basement at Sam's Club, however.) He can go on and on about how conservatives wear these ideological blinders that prevent them from seeing new political realities.

"The country is changing," Pawlenty says. "Socially, demographically, economically, technologically. And that doesn't mean that you throw your principles that you built your party on, your philosophy on, out the window—you just have to make sure they are translated into terms . . . relevant in the political marketplace of today, not to mention tomorrow."

Some examples?

"One of the leading issues in the country is health care," Pawlenty says. "Until recently, Republicans didn't want to touch it because they thought it was, you know, some sort of disguised social service insurgency. And yet, it's a real problem for real people. It's breaking the backs of unions, it's breaking the backs of employees, it's breaking the backs of families, and businesses, and governments. And we were kinda *slow* in responding to the issue.

"Most people by the way agree that the government shouldn't take over the system. So the Republicans have built-in running room, or built-in advantage, or built-in momentum here—*if* we could articulate a viable, affordable, forward-looking private-sector alternative that actually helps people. So (a) we were slow to the draw and (b) I think we pooched the details.

"For example. Prescription drug issue. Now this is just one slice of a multislice big pie, but it's meant to be demonstrative. One of the driving forces in health care costs is prescription drug costs. Before Medicare Part D there was a debate in places like Minnesota about should we allow granny, grandma and grandpa, to go get prescription drugs from Canada. And there were two primary objections—from *conservatives!*—on this. One was: It's not safe. First of all, as it relates to established, credible, reputable Canadian pharmacies, there *is no safety issue*, it's complete *bunk*. . . . Show me the dead Canadians. Where are the Canadians dying en masse from this unsafe Canadian pharmacy infrastructure?

"And the answer is there are no dead Canadians. Now there are some pirates on the Internet that pretend to be Canadian pharmacies, but if you do even nominal inspections you can find licensed, credible, reputable Canadian pharmacies who then could provide much more affordable prescription drugs in many instances to people who needed some help. Republicans were substantially against that—number one, on safety, which was complete bunk, and then the other argument was, Wait a minute, as conservatives you can't be buying prescription drugs from Canada because they have government-negotiated prices for prescription drugs in Canada and it's interference with the marketplace. Interesting. You know?

He becomes most passionate when he discusses Sam's Club Republicanism—a theory of politics he's done more than anyone else to put into action. (Pawlenty shops at Sam's Club, incidentally.)

"We're going to get *righteous*—as conservatives, everyone goes around talking about we're for free and fair trade. Free and fair trade. So it's okay from a conservative perspective to outsource great segments of our entire economy to Communist China, but we can't let granny and grandpa go buy drugs from Canada. Now that's an example of, I think, unclear thinking that, first of all, doesn't violate conservative principles if you look at it apples to apples compared with what conservatives embrace around the rest of the globe for other products. And two, that's a populist message. You know?

"We have people who are uninsured, they can't afford to eat, they don't have prescription drugs—

"What are you doing to fix it?"

A little something new . . . Few people would deny that Tim Pawlenty is a man of the right. The problem is that it's becoming harder and harder to determine who or what is a "man of the right." The top three Republican presidential candidates—Giuliani, McCain, and Romney—all disagree with aspects of the movement-conservative agenda. Outside the South, successful Republican politicians have felt the need to move left in order to remain competitive. For all but diehard activists, the borders of conservatism are in flux. It's reasonable to assume that someday soon, after a haphazard and acrimonious process, those borders will be worked out. The question is just how much of what we think of as "conservatism" will be left. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bettmann / Corbis

'Pharos of Alexandria' by Maerten van Heemskerck, ca. 1540

Classical Metropolis

The Alexandria of antiquity BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

The grandest and most culturally rich city of the classical world was—not Athens. Athens had its political and artistic heyday during the fifth century B.C., when it produced Pericles, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Socrates, Herodotus, the Parthenon, and a lot of spectacular pottery. After that, Athens was essentially through. It became a pleasant backwater where you went to study philosophy for a few years under Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, or whoever else was in fashion. Even Rome had a surprisingly short-lived cultural heyday, around the time of Christ, and Rome began to fade as a political center of gravity during the third century A.D., as the "Roman" emperors who ruled it became less Roman and more Eastern.

The Rise and Fall of Alexandria
Birthplace of the Modern Mind
by Justin Pollard and Howard Reid
Viking, 315 pp., $27.95

The real action—the most sustained economic, intellectual, and literary brilliance for century after century after century until the very end of the antique world—lay in Alexandria, the Greek-speaking port city founded by Alexander the Great at the mouth of the Nile in about 334 B.C. Alexandria's run of glory was extraordinary: Nine hundred years, during which its population, swelled by the lucrative export trade in grain from the Nile valley that essentially fed the entire Mediterranean world, was second only to Rome's, and its architecture—miles of colonnaded streets laid out in grids, punctuated by marble temples and palaces—was fabled in its splendor, and that didn't even count the great marble-faced lighthouse on the island of Pharos, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, at least 400 feet high, the height of a modern 40-story skyscraper, and topped by a huge bonfire and reflecting mirror so that its light could be seen for miles out

Charlotte Allen is the author, most recently, of The Human Christ.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at sea, making Alexandria a magnet for traders.

There was also the library of Alexandria—founded during the early third century B.C. by the first of the city's rulers, the self-styled "Pharaoh" and onetime general of Alexander's, Ptolemy I Soter. His son, Ptolemy II, completed the lighthouse—which was said to house three-quarters of a million books (the actual number was probably substantially lower)—and the Museum, a kind of research institute for philosophers and scientists abutting the library.

This plethora of large-scale architectural and intellectual enterprises was typical of Alexandria, which as a "Hellenistic," or Greek-style, polity, in contrast to a "Hellenic," or authentically Greek one, made up in quantity for what it lacked in quality. No individual building in Alexandria (and almost nothing of them remains standing) displayed quite the perfection of the Parthenon, but the cumulative effect of all of them, elaborately carved and decorated beyond anything the Athenians could muster, must have been dazzling.

Alexandria never produced a poet on quite the sublime order of Homer, Pindar, or Sophocles, yet it did provide a home to Theocritus (circa 300-circa 260 B.C.), an immigrant from the Greek city of Syracuse on Sicily, whose yards of finely wrought pastoral, satirical, and love poetry addressed to both sexes influenced the poets of the West up to, and even through, the 20th century; Callimachus (circa 305-circa 240), inventor of the witty epigram; and Apollonius of Rhodes (died circa 246), an Alexandrian native (he lived only briefly on the Greek island) whose 6,000-line epic, the *Argonautica*, telling the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece, was a template for Virgil's *Aeneid*. And if Alexandria lacked a Plato or an Aristotle, it did produce Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus, two great neo-Platonists of the third century A.D.

It was in the realm of science and mathematics, however, that Alexandria uniquely excelled during its early centuries, and in which Justin Pollard and Howard Reid, authors of *The Rise and Fall of Alexandria*, are most interested. Science was then a branch of philosophy, an effort to describe and assign causes to the way in which the natural world worked, and Aristotle in particular was an empiricist as well as a metaphysician. The library of Alexandria and the political and intellectual ambitions of the first two Ptolemies drew scientists like magnets.

The first scientist of note to arrive in Alexandria was Aristarchus of Samos (circa 310-circa 230 B.C.), who had studied at the school of Pythagoras and also with Ptolemy II's tutor, Strato of Lampsacus, who had in turn studied at Aristotle's school, the Lyceum, in Athens. Strato, whose epithet was "the Physicist," held that the universe was a mechanism that could be explained without recourse to divine forces, a peculiarly modern notion that became a hallmark of Alexandrian science. At least as Pollard and Reid would have it, Aristarchus proved an apt pupil of his master: In an effort to calculate (erroneously but not too erroneously) the relative sizes of the earth, sun, and moon, Aristarchus realized that the sun was vastly larger than the earth and concluded that the conventional model proposed by Plato and Aristotle, in which the sun revolved around a spherical earth, made no sense given the relative size of the two bodies. Aristarchus therefore hypothesized a heliocentric universe, anticipating Copernicus by some 1,800 years. His contemporaries considered him either impious or daft.

The latter opinion came from Archimedes (circa 287-212 B.C.), the mathematician and engineer who (so Pollard and Reid argue on the basis of his friendships with prominent Alexandrian scientists) sojourned in Alexandria between stints in his native Syracuse inventing advanced catapults and ships' pulleys and crying, "Eureka!" on discovering that he displaced his volume in water in the bathtub. Aristarchus' heliocentric theories were eventually all but forgotten, supplanted during the second century A.D. by the precepts of another Alexandrian, the astronomer Claudius Ptolemy (no relation to the Egyptian rulers by that name), whose *Almagest* laid out the elaborate geocentric system of sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies that held sway in the West until the dawn of the modern era.

Other famous Alexandrian mathematicians, scientists, and inventors included Euclid (circa 325-circa 265 B.C.), the father of geometry; the geographer Eratosthenes of Cyrene (circa 275-195 B.C.), who calculated with amazing accuracy the circumference of the earth; the barber (by day) Ctesibus (circa 200 B.C.), inventor of the water clock that allowed the ancients to tell time indoors for the first time; and Hero (circa 100 A.D.), an engineer-geometrician who devised elaborate hydraulics-driven machines that anticipated the Industrial Revolution. Hero, unfortunately, failed to discover the other component of the Industrial Revolution, cheap coal-fired power, so it remained more economical to buy slaves to do the work that could be performed by Hero's steam-and-water contraptions, which were relegated to providing flashy special effects at theaters and temples.

The second-century physician Galen, whose most famous patient was the emperor Marcus Aurelius, researched the circulatory system while in Alexandria, and in the third century A.D., the mathematician Diophantus invented a rudimentary form of algebra. Modern chemistry, via medieval alchemy, may have its origins in the hermetic writings of Alexandrian late antiquity.

Pollard and Reid are makers of historical documentaries for television (PBS, BBC, National Geographic), not academic historians, and they freely mix the yarns that the ancient biographers of scientists spun about their subjects with more verifiable facts. Nonetheless—or perhaps because of their amateur status—they tell the story of ancient Alexandrian science with relish and brio that few university scholars can muster these days. Their lively and lucid description of Eratosthenes' methodology for calculating the earth's circumference at 25,000 miles—which involved simultaneously measuring the angle of the sun on the day of the summer solstice at Alexandria and the city of Syene some 600 miles up the Nile—is the book's high point, not only because Eratosthenes' calculations were so accurate but because he also figured out, with equal near-accuracy, that the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

earth's axis is tilted toward the sun on solstice day.

"His proof provided the first scientific explanation of a phenomenon that every Greek and Egyptian experienced: the seasons," write Pollard and Reid.

The two write with equal brio, again mixing gossipy anecdotes from Plutarch and elsewhere with verifiable history, about the Ptolemy family that ruled Alexandria and the entire land of Egypt until the suicide of the last Ptolemy, Cleopatra, turned Egypt into a Roman province in 30 B.C.

The creation of Alexandria was both a stroke of genius and an egomaniacal whim of Alexander the Great. The Egyptians had historically had no interest in seafaring and no Mediterranean port. All there was on the marshes of the Nile mouth when Alexander arrived was a tiny fishing village and the offshore island of Pharos, mentioned by Homer. Alexander had just finished conquering Egypt, then under the dominion of Persia, as part of his great sweep eastward. He conceived the idea of connecting Pharos to the mainland by a great causeway (thus creating a double harbor), hired a planner named Dinocrates of Rhodes to execute his idea, and then left, never to return to the city that was to bear his name.

After Alexander died in 323 at the age of 32, and while his heirs were still squabbling over his vast empire, Ptolemy I, a childhood friend from Macedonia, quietly seized control of Egypt. Ptolemy decided that his safest bet for staying in control was to insinuate his family into the local culture, not repeating the mistakes of the Persians, whom the native Egyptians had loathed as foreigners. With the help of Egyptian priests, Ptolemy invented a new Egyptian god, Serapis, a fusion of the traditional Egyptian gods Osiris and the bull-god Apis, and built a huge temple to him in Alexandria, which was to be the headquarters of his cult.

Ptolemy also announced to the Egyptians that he was their new pharaoh. To shore up the legitimacy of the family, his son Ptolemy II, who took over the Egyptian throne in 285 B.C., adopted the pharaonic custom of marrying his sister. The Greeks considered brother-sister incest repulsive, but the Ptolemies gamely continued the practice right down to their dynastic demise. Cleopatra was married to two of her brothers, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV, and she was also the only Ptolemy to speak Egyptian, which the rest of her Graecophone relatives never bothered to learn.

The first two Ptolemies and their successor, Ptolemy III (who ruled from 246 to 222 B.C.), were ambitious men with powerful personalities under whom Egypt not only flourished but expanded its territory well into the Middle East with a series of wars against the rulers of Syria, who were descendants of another of Alexander's generals, Antiochus. All three early Ptolemies were aggressive sponsors of intellectual and literary culture. Ptolemy III deemed that the library of Alexandria should acquire a copy of every book known to the Greek world, and his father, Ptolemy II, was said to have directed the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek Septuagint version for the benefit of Alexandria's numerous Jewish immigrants, who came to comprise about a fifth of the city's population.

After Ptolemy III's death and the accession of his son, Ptolemy IV, dynastic decadence set in, with the usual corruption, weak leadership, sexual escapades, murderous palace intrigues, and overindulgence in luxury. There was a general downhill slide, as the Antiochenes won back their Mideast lands, and the Romans moved inexorably eastward, making the Ptolemies their puppets.

Unfortunately, Pollard and Reid take a downward slide at about this point, too, and one senses that they become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of historical material (made more complicated by the fact that all the Ptolemies seemed to have been named either Ptolemy or, if female, Cleopatra). The authors simply skip several generations of Ptolemies—including the intriguing Ptolemy X, whose rule alternated with that of his older brother Ptolemy IX depending on who managed to seize power at any given time. Ptolemy IX was also Ptolemy X's father-in-law, since the latter married the former's daughter, Cleopatra Berenice. The brothers' mother, Cleopatra III, co-ruled with both of them (and also with their father, Ptolemy VIII, who in Ptolemaic tradition was also her uncle) until Ptolemy X either murdered her or she died of natural causes. Finally, in 88 B.C., Ptolemy IX shoved his younger brother off the throne for the last time, and Ptolemy X died in a naval battle trying to win back his kingdom. A few years later, when Ptolemy IX expired, the Romans moved in and turned the Ptolemaic dynasty into their puppets.

The most famous of the later Ptolemies was Cleopatra VII, or, as we know her, "Cleopatra" (a granddaughter of Ptolemy IX via a mistress), who makes a superb yarn: Learned and linguistically brilliant (she was fluent not only in Greek and Egyptian, but also in Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Ethiopic); clever enough to wrest the rule of Egypt for herself by either surviving or conniving her way past the claims of her two teenage brother-husbands, as well as the Roman generals Pompey and Julius Caesar; and infinitely sexy, although, as her coins indicate, not exactly beautiful. Cleopatra was the mistress of both Caesar, whose short-lived son she bore (he was supposedly Ptolemy XV) and whose companion she was in Rome when he was assassinated in 44 B.C., and, most famously, his friend Mark Antony, whose reversals of fortune led to her decision to take her life rather than be paraded through Rome as the trophy of Antony's rival, the future emperor Augustus.

Alexandria's prosperity and prestige continued unabated during the political turmoil, and during the Christian era, under Roman rule, it became as great a Christian city as it had been a pagan one. Although Pollard and Reid nicely narrate the various Roman emperors' sometimes bloody contacts with Alexandria, as well as the career of Philo of Alexandria (circa 20 B.C.-50 A.D.), the Jewish exegete whose works combined Platonic philosophy with an allegorical reading of the Scriptures, they do not understand Christianity very well, starting with Jesus, whom they characterize as a famous revolutionary who "directly challenged the established social order." They allot seven pages to Clement of Alexandria—an early-third-century

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

theologian whom they describe as an advocate of some sort of pan-religious amalgam of Christianity, Judaism, and paganism (an assessment that would have surprised Clement)—but only a few paragraphs to Origen, the greatest Christian intellect that the city produced.

The pivotal role that other Alexandrian theologians, chiefly the bishops Athanasius and Cyril, played in the formation of Christological doctrine is mostly passed over by Pollard and Reid. They even give short shrift to the famous Christian heresies, gnosticism and Arianism, that Alexandria spawned. Egypt was the nursery of Christian monasticism in forms that prevail to this day; but in the view of Pollard and Reid, monasticism equals "religious extremism," and the monks are chiefly notable in this book for firing up an Alexandrian mob in 415 to murder the pagan philosopher Hypatia—who was, in fact, posthumously admired by many Christians. At least Pollard and Reid don't blame the Christians for destroying the library, noting that it was ravaged and depleted by several major fires over many centuries.

Starting in the fifth century, Alexandria went into decline, although for reasons more complex than the simple Christian expunging of pagan Greek culture that Pollard and Reid give. Theological differences between Egyptian Christianity and that of the rest of the Roman world isolated Alexandria religiously and politically while, at the same time, the eastern Roman empire headquartered in Constantinople (an economic rival of Alexandria) could not protect its mideastern and African provinces against an array of new enemies. The Persians captured Alexandria in 616, and then came the newly Islamicized Arabs in 640. Wherever the Arabs went, the classical world ended abruptly. In Alexandria's case, the end came by way of one last (although perhaps legendary) conflagration of the books at its famous library, which the Arab general Amr ibn al-As ordered parceled out to the ravaged city's bathhouses and used as fuel for their boilers.

So died the glory of, perhaps, the most wonderful city that the classical world produced. ♦

Battleground America

Suddenly the Midwest is up for grabs in the next election. **BY KARLYN BOWMAN**

Earl and Merle Black, the brothers who have added immeasurably to our understanding of the politics of the South, have turned their attention to the rest of the country, and their latest book, *Divided America: The Ferocious Power Struggle in American Politics*, is a numbers junkie's look at what makes our political map red and blue.

Divided America
The Ferocious Power Struggle in American Politics
by Earl Black and Merle Black
Simon & Schuster, 304 pp., $26

The Blacks begin by reminding us that from 1932 to 1950 the Democrats held the White House and both houses of Congress in nine of 10 elections. Between 1952 and 2004, however, one party controlled two of these institutions and the other party the third nearly two-thirds of the time. Today, the parties are evenly balanced. This transformation is the book's subject, and the authors view it through discussions of five regions and the groups that predominate in them.

After discussing national trends, the Blacks take us on a tour of the changing electorates in Republican strongholds (the South and the Plains/Mountain states), the Democratic ones (the Northeast and Pacific Coast), and, finally, the competitive Midwest. They believe that the Democratic and Republican parties have "less in common in their composition, values, and objectives than was the case after World War II," and that neither party can win by appealing solely to its core supporters.

Karlyn Bowman is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute where she studies public opinion.

Using data from the American National Election Study and national exit polls, the authors tell their story in clear language and clean charts. In an age of PowerPoint presentations that frequently obscure more than they reveal, the Blacks' simple charts tell complex stories very well: One chapter, for example, includes a chart on the share of whites, African Americans, and what the authors call the "new minorities" in the electorate from 1952 to 2004. Three charts on the same page then show the partisan identification of these groups over the same time span.

Another set of figures looks at the realignment of white voters that began in the late 1970s. The first chart shows the size of the moderate, conservative, and liberal white groups in the nation, and then three other charts show us how these groups have voted over the span. At a glance, it is possible to see one of the keys to GOP success—the realignment of white conservatives toward the Republican party. In 1976, about 40 percent of white conservatives called themselves Republicans and the Democratic party included as many white conservatives as white liberals (19 and 22 percent, respectively). By the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency, 63 percent of white conservatives called themselves Republicans and just 15 percent Democrats.

Today, conservative Democrats are an endangered species. White liberals have moved in the Democratic direction, but as the Blacks' chart shows us, they are a much smaller group than the white conservatives.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The largest group —white moderates—now splits evenly.

Both parties appear to agree that the key to the next election will be the Midwest, what the authors describe as the "most volatile, evenly balanced, and reliably competitive geographical area in the United States." The region is second only to the South in population (64 to 84 million). In 2004, 39 percent of voters in the Midwest were Republicans and 39 percent Democrats. In the region, neither party has been able to capitalize on the developments that have moved it ahead in other regions.

The realignment of white Christians has fueled Republican growth in the South, for example, and growing numbers of ethnic and racial minorities and non-Christian whites have added to the Democrats' strength in their strongholds of the Northeast and Pacific Coast. But in the Midwest, union strength has "partially blunted" the GOP's advance. The Democrats' problem here is that strongly Democratic groups such as minorities are still a fairly small slice of the Midwestern electorate: Whites made up 85 percent of the Midwestern electorate in 2004. In the Pacific region and Northeast, where Democrats have made gains, the size of the white voter group has declined. Fifty years ago, Democrats enjoyed a slight advantage among white voters in the Midwest. In 2004, Republicans held a seven-point edge. But this edge is much lower than the one Republicans have in their strongholds.

This book was written before the 2006 elections. It would be interesting to hear what the Blacks think about the strength the Democrats demonstrated in the Mountain West last year, a region the authors put in the Republican camp; or what they have to say about the argument advanced by Thomas Schaller that Democrats should simply write off the South and concentrate on other regions. But political junkies can learn a great deal from Merle and Earl Black's expert dissection of the data. ♦

Harvard or Bust

They'll get in their 'reach school' even if it kills them.

BY STEFAN BECK

In 1741, Alexander Pope and John Arbuthnot published a comic novella, *The Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus.* Martinus is the unfortunate progeny of Cornelius, a "grave and learned gentleman" who at the time of his son's conception "had already chalked out all possible schemes for the improvement of the male child." Here, wee Marty is taught Greek: "What most conduced to his easy attainment of this language was his love of gingerbread; which his father observing, caused it to be stamped with the letters of the Greek alphabet; and the child the very first day ate as far as iota."

The Overachievers
by Alexandra Robbins
Hyperion, 448 pp., $24.95

Many college students would recognize their own upbringings in *Scriblerus*. Educational cookies have been replaced by Suzuki violin lessons and Baby Einstein DVDs, but the principle is the same: Genius is made, not born. Some present-day Scribleri and their extraordinary lives, works, panic attacks, sports injuries, Adderall prescriptions, and troubled home lives are the focus of Alexandra Robbins's *The Overachievers*.

The title is too charitable. How about *The Basketcase Diaries* or *One Flew Into the Outpatient Clinic*? Pope's rigorous academic model is quaint next to Robbins's depiction of how American students are "educated."

"Julie," a high school senior, is a "straight-A student . . . president and co-founder of the Hiking Vikings (named for [Walt Whitman High School's] mascot), a yoga fanatic, a member of the Spanish Honors Society, and a big buddy to a child in a homeless shelter." She also suffers from thinning hair, which her doctors attribute to stress.

No surprise, given that she and her peers are hammered with adult expectations of hard work and competition from nursery school on. Robbins delivers a satire-defying account of a Manhattan private school entrance interview—for four year olds. She later mentions a Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) tutor who was hired to prep a 10 year old. "First, do no harm" might be a good place to start.

Health falls by the wayside for Robbins's subjects. The average student's sleep schedule, she reveals, takes a cue from Count Dracula. But even if extra sleep would improve students' health, it wouldn't do anything about the mentality behind the all-nighter epidemic. Notwithstanding a statistic Robbins cites about fatigue-related car accidents, most students survive bad sleep habits. What stays with them is a need to succeed so powerful as to be its own justification for corner-cutting: No time to find a Muslim to interview for your social studies project? Invent one.

The cheating is bad enough, but more disturbing is that these students could find a mere assignment more important than integrity. Can't build a decent toothpick bridge for the physics contest? Instead of buying one from an upperclassman, don't build one. It's not as if anybody has to drive a truck over it. Yet everything is a matter of life or death. Here is Ryland, a junior:

> Ryland realized he couldn't endure another period. He skipped his next class to go to the guidance department, where, still shaking, sweating,

Stefan Beck is a writer in Philadelphia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Corbis / George Stainmetz

The Digital Stradivarius Project at MIT

> and crying, his heart racing, he feverishly attempted to cram for the source of his misery: a physics test.

It's difficult for a well-adjusted person to sympathize. While one's first impulse is to point and laugh, Robbins's book conveys with discomfiting clarity that none of this is funny. The "culture of overachieverism" is making madmen, not Renaissance men. Childhood, emotional maturity, and genuine education are sacrificed for "parenting as product development."

Let's think about the products, then. The most affecting of Robbins's portraits is of "AP Frank," a senior when we meet him and a Harvard freshman for most of the book. His nickname comes from his taking a masochistic number of Advanced Placement classes. The study routine followed by AP Frank and his younger brother—strictly enforced by their Korean mother—sounds like something out of a Maoist reeducation center:

> Each afternoon . . . they were expected to sit at their desks in their adjacent bedrooms and study, backs to the hallway, doors open. From an office chair stationed in the hall, positioned precisely so that she could see every move the boys made, their mother peered at them over her newspaper. . . . From 2:30 in the afternoon until they went to sleep, with only a quick break for a dinner . . . she watched them.

By the time AP Frank reaches college, his brother lives with a foster family and his parents' marriage has collapsed. Doubtless an extreme case; but it's the just the sort of thing one imagines will happen to the students Robbins shadows. Anyone forced to do something he doesn't love is bound to crack before too long.

This expectation meets a stubborn obstacle: the students themselves. Tellingly, Robbins never wonders how much of the fault lies with them for worrying about trifles. If the teenager is naturally rebellious, why is he weeping in the guidance office? Why not tune in, turn on, and flunk out? It seems that a transformation has occurred in the way children approach the *idea* of life: They are hell-bent on impressing everyone but themselves. Friends and family are secondary to the nuts and bolts of schooling.

AP Frank posts to his weblog: "Number of time my friends—who are my family—have saved me, rescued me, brought me back from the horror and terror of being alone: 1461." The honest reader is jarred by how loosely the term "friends" is used by a boy who is scarcely allowed out of his house. He fares better at Harvard, even managing to kiss a girl, but still one feels that he has missed out on some of the most important years of his life.

If *The Overachievers* elicits cruel judgments, it is only because the reader sees how much better it could have been for these kids. Some, like AP Frank, do end up rebelling against their parents or teachers, but an obvious question lingers: What took so long? It shouldn't require health problems, meltdowns, and misery to let one in on the big secret that there's more to life than good grades or admittance to the best college. But it does—because it *is* a secret.

For much of our adolescent population, life is easy, so there are few ways outside of the school system to gain any sense of validation or self-worth. But everyone wants to feel important, to stake a place in the world. Is it any wonder that young people seize upon that last, ever-narrowing, measure of success—academic distinction?

The trouble with the term "overachiever," though, is that it implies achievement, and there is little of it to be seen in Robbins's account. We are to take it on faith that her subjects' accomplishments are impressive. When the students speak for themselves, the jig is up. High scores and padded resumes can't disguise the boundless banality, sentimentality, and self-pity of which these Ivy-bound *wunderkinder* are capable.

AP Frank, with apologies to Jack Handey: "I have realized that with every beginning comes an end, that in hatching, the chick destroys the egg." Sam, the future Supreme Court justice: "He could write [his college essay]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about witnessing the decision of *Lawrence* v. *Texas* . . . where he had watched citizens in the public arena sitting quietly, tears of joy streaming down their faces. . . . Sam considered writing his essay as if he were gay."

Robbins misses the very point that her stellar reporting conveys, which is that these students are at once superficial thinkers and cunning operators. They want glory; when they act against their parents' wishes, it's because they want it on their own terms. They're best at presenting themselves as overachievers, not at doing worthwhile things, least of all at seriously pondering themselves or the world around them.

"Top" students are rarely great at one pursuit. They must be passionate about many things—not only archery and American history, but also the Sousaphone and Meals on Wheels. They love the concept of accomplishment, but it is unlikely that they would care so much without others to observe their ascent. Their humility—"I wish everyone would stop asking about my perfect SAT score, acceptance to Princeton, etc."—rings false.

Robbins hasn't fallen for it; she's orchestrated it. She is, by her own oblique admission, a recovering overachiever, and too close to the problem to see it clearly. Her recommendations for schools, colleges, counselors, and parents might make life more pleasant for overachievers, but that's not enough. Schools can limit the APs a student is permitted to take, but in the student who takes the maximum, you'll still find that hunger for one-upsmanship.

The Overachievers is a lie that tells the truth. Its anecdotes and figures are engineered to throw the best light on students like Alexandra Robbins. These students exist, whether or not in great numbers, and their attitudes are putting obscene pressure on kids who'd rather *enjoy* learning. Even the student who knows he can't pull it off receives a confusing, deleterious message from the accolades heaped on what is really a special class of showoff. If this seems alarmist or cynical, look no further than the words that conclude the book:

> Ryland happily carried the last of the toy bags to his car, which was crammed to the roof with hundreds of gifts that people had donated because he asked them to. . . . He knew that no matter where he ended up, he would get into a college—a good college—where he would get a solid education, learn subjects relevant to his interests, make close friends, try new experiences, and get involved in activities he was passionate about. As Ryland drove away through snow melting in the bright December sun, he was certain that he was going to be just fine.

Everything will be fine, for isn't that what overachievers deserve? Never mind that the quarter of their lives they just lost could have been spent, ahem, getting a solid education, learning subjects relevant to their interests, making close friends. . . . Suffice to say that when Robbins solicits fan mail for the "main characters," some of us will want to save it for the people we remember from high school, who were more worthy of our best and worst feelings than any physics test could have been. ♦

Mission for Moscow

Better dead than read is the verdict on the literary left.

BY RON CAPSHAW

During the Cold War there emerged a peculiar type of Communist apologist who, amidst all the admissions of purges, invasions, and gulags, desperately searched for and usually found some type of evolution in the system. Alan Wald undertakes the same quest with American Communist writers of the 1930s and '40s: He desperately wades through all the pseudonyms and minor novels to find chartable growth from knee-jerk Stalinism to mature ambivalence. But the writers he studies experience their most complex moment before they sign the Party card, when they register an uncomfortable premonition that artistic searches for truth might be subordinated to political propaganda. For many, it is their last wise and independent thought.

Trinity of Passion
The Literary Left and the Antifascist Crusade
by Alan M. Wald
North Carolina, 344 pp., $34.95

Arthur Miller

Getty Images / Arnold Newman

What strikes you about the writers collected here is their rigidity of thought, and how, even in moments when their artistic conscience from older days reasserts itself in print, their worldview—a cultural lag of Black Belt nationalism, heroic heterosexual Loyalism (as opposed to effeminate fascism) and string-pulling fascism in America—makes it impossible for a return to artistic freedom. Communists like Harry Haywood advocate the Internationale's policy of black nationalism in the 1930s, and return 30 years later with all ideological baggage intact, to approving applause from younger comrades. Alvah Bessie, nicknamed the Errol Flynn of the left because of his military service with

Ron Capshaw is a writer in Midlothian, Virginia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War, revealed a lifelong obsession with promoting the theme of the effeminizing nature of capitalism and the restorative sexual power of communism (beefcake on tractors and barricades).

Wald has done solid detective work, however, on uncovering the real writers behind party and pulp pseudonyms. Despite the liberal obituaries, Arthur Miller was (briefly) a committed Communist who wrote theatrical columns under the goyish pseudonym of Matt Wayne. Like one of those Soviet spymasters in Ian Fleming, Wayne was never photographed in or out of the *New Masses* office. Nevertheless, Wayne/Miller caused a minor cultural blip by anticipating Albert Maltz's controversial article criticizing Marxism as an artistic straitjacket by a year. When the word from Moscow was that such criticisms were politically suspect, Maltz saw the literary error of his ways and Wayne disappeared down the memory hole, replaced by Miller, who appeared in the party press without deviationist tendencies but full of righteous anger at American anti-Semitism.

Ed Lacy, a bestselling mystery writer, was in reality Leonard Zinberg, a Stalinist who abandoned the party press as a publishing outlet for the postwar paperback boom. His one-note rhetoric about American fascism orchestrating racial strife found new life in police melodrama. By the 1960s, the long-standing Communist literary goal of theme predominating over truth-searching could find a readership if layered with enough pulp devices of pistol-whipping cops and doomed black revolutionaries.

Like his subjects, Wald won't go where the evidence leads him. Many of the writers studied here expressed dislike for their fathers. A writer unafraid to embrace the notion that, perhaps, the party served as a substitute parent (socialist motherland, iron father in the Kremlin) could ask important historical questions about why some writers embrace totalitarianism and others, like Orwell, never succumb. But such a conclusion—that maladjusted people gravitated toward the Communist party—veers uncomfortably close to Whittaker Chambers and J.B. Matthews country.

Instead, Wald combs the material for a consistency to progressive ideals that can invalidate the usual trajectory of leftist writers: Depression-era commitment, '40s disillusionment, and '50s apathy. But commitment is one thing; denial is another. And whatever their disappointment in the Soviet Union, most of the writers never let go of the fantasies imbibed during party times. Perhaps they didn't have the strength to rebel against one more parent.

Wald concludes his study on a celebratory note, where writers artistically break out of the sectarian press into the more mainstream pulp audiences. But with the party's simple categorizations of good and evil, and their preference for conspiracy and masculinity, it is fair to say that these authors were always writing pulp. ♦

Mum's the Word

John Osborne's rebellion began in the cradle.

BY EDWARD SHORT

When John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* opened at the Royal Court on May 8, 1956, the initial response was dismal. To an audience fond of the witty badinage of Noël Coward, the clever plot twists of Terence Rattigan, and the modern morality plays of T.S. Eliot, the scattershot invective of Jimmy Porter, Osborne's hero, seemed tedious and offensive. Osborne himself recalled the first night audience as "mostly adrift, like Eskimos watching a Restoration Comedy." Many walked out.

John Osborne
The Many Lives of the Angry Young Man
by John Heilpern
Knopf, 527 pp., $35

The reviewers were equally unsympathetic. One found Porter "a caricature of the sort of frustrated left-wing intellectual who, I thought, died out in the war." Another took Osborne himself to task: "When he stops being angry—or when he knows what he's angry about—he might write a very good play." Others were more straightforwardly abusive, calling the play "putrid," "sickening," and "self-pitying." But then Kenneth Tynan's review claimed that "I doubt if I could love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*: it is the best young play of its decade," and the production was saved. Osborne became famous overnight.

When Osborne followed up his unexpected success with *The Entertainer* (1957) and *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964)—which gave memorable expression to his sense of loss and futility—he proved his staying power, though later he would write several plays that should never have left his notebooks.

In this entertaining new biography John Heilpern looks squarely at the many flaws of the first Angry Young Man without losing sight of his good points. Like Piers Paul Read's brilliant biography of Alec Guinness—another flawed man of talent—Heilpern's book shows his subject unusual compassion. In many respects, Osborne was a monster; but he could also be remarkably generous and good-hearted. Heilpern's evenhandedness underscores the radical contradictions of the man.

To try to describe Osborne the playwright, Heilpern quotes Artie Shaw

Edward Short's forthcoming book on John Henry Newman and his contemporaries will be published by Continuum.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

describing how he approached playing the clarinet: "You're trying to make a sound that no one ever got before, creating an emotion. You're trying to take notes and make them come out in a way that moves you. If it moves you, it's going to move others." Yet Osborne's plays exhibit too much emotion: Structurally ramshackle and devoid of any sustained thought, they are often little more than staged jeremiads. If there is an apt jazz parallel to Osborne's work it is not the swinging aplomb of Artie Shaw but the cacophonous banality of Ornette Coleman. Nevertheless, even for those skeptical about the merits of Osborne's work, this book is worth reading. It re-creates a theater that has all but vanished, and a rackety life hobbled by hate.

John James Osborne (1929-1994) was born an only child in Fulham. His mother, Nellie Beatrice Grove, was an enterprising cockney who began work as a charwoman in an orphanage, did a stint as cashier in Lyons Corner House in the Strand, and finally became a popular barmaid known for her lewd patter.

Osborne's father, Thomas Godfrey, was a frail, asthmatic Welshman, a commercial artist who had wanted to be a real artist but never managed it. In the all-important calculus of class, he married beneath himself and regretted it; every time his wife opened her mouth, he winced. Like many of the artists Osborne admired—Anton Chekhov, Aubrey Beardsley, D.H. Lawrence, George Orwell—he died young of tuberculosis.

Osborne went to his grave adoring his father, even though his most vivid memories of him were of his coming home "after supper full of Waterloo buffet whiskey, Guinness or Moussec playing the upright piano and singing 'Red Sails in the Sunset.'" On such crumbs did Osborne feed his filial love. In *Look Back in Anger* he has Jimmy Porter say: "For twelve months I watched my father dying when I was ten years old. . . . You see I learnt at an early age what it was to be angry—angry and helpless. And I can never forget it."

Osborne claimed that he hated his mother because she was "the grabbing uncaring crone of my childhood," berated him publicly when he was growing up, and showed no grief when his beloved father died. What most galled him was her refusal to show him the maternal love he craved. When she died at age 87, he began an article for the *Times*, "A year in which one's mother died can't be all bad." He repaid her cockney cruelty with something of his own cockney vindictiveness.

Hulton-Deutsch / Corbis

Laurence Olivier as Archie Rice in 'The Entertainer' (1957)

After being expelled from school for punching one of his masters, Osborne worked as a copy editor for a trade magazine called *Gas World*. Most of his days were spent poring over the huge office dictionary. Notebooks from this period abound with word lists: "Acolyte, addled, alchemy, blancmange, bumbling, burgeon, bollocks, clammy, coverture, conk . . . . " But it was not until he escaped journalism for repertory theater that he put his love of words to the test. *Look Back in Anger* was not his first but his fourth play, and drew on much that he had learned as a repertory actor.

When it came to marriage, Osborne's motto was "Eat, Drink and Remarry." In trying to account for why he was such a serially poor husband, he explained, "I often confronted problems like an improvising chimpanzee faced with the dashboard of a jumbo jet." Osborne's first marriage to fellow actor Pamela Lane supplied

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most of the materials for *Look Back in Anger*. Lane's middle-class parents strenuously objected to the match, and Osborne pursued it largely to spite them, just as Jimmy Porter marries Alison to spite her parents. When Lane saw the play, she was amazed by its fidelity to their marital nightmare. After they divorced, Osborne married Mary Ure, his beautiful leading lady, who was playing Alison at the time. Osborne later admitted that he married Ure because she reminded him of Lane, which prompts Heilpern to remark: "The man who thinks of his first wife while marrying his second gives nostalgia a bad name." Although a talented actress, Ure would later descend into madness. (It is remarkable how many of his wives came to bad ends.)

It was with his third wife, Penelope Gilliatt, film critic for the *New Yorker*, that Osborne had his only child, Nolan, whom he would later disown after he discovered that she preferred the company of her teenage girlfriends to his. Worse, she reminded him of his stony, mocking mother. Gilliatt spent most of her adult life telephoning William Shawn with late edits and drinking herself to death; the man who brought up Osborne's castoff daughter was none other than the old *Times* critic Vincent Canby who, when asked for comments about the playwright, replied, "I've nothing to say about the bastard!"

Wife number four was another of Osborne's leading ladies, Jill Bennett, with whom he would have a bruisingly destructive marriage, fueled by drink and venom. After its collapse, Osborne formed something called Adolfs Anonymous, "Adolf" being his nickname for Bennett. Anyone tempted to marry Jill Bennett could ring the organization day or night and be talked out of it. Bennett would eventually commit suicide.

Before leaving Bennett, Osborne suffered a nervous breakdown, during which he mused: "'Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold.' Is that right? It feels just right at this moment in time. I feel like a figment. A pretty awful fiction. I take back what I have said about the Irish." Osborne's fifth and final wife was Helen Dawson, arts editor for the *Observer*, with whom he shared estates in Shropshire and Clun—A.E. Housmanland—about which he would remark, "I may be the poorest playwright in England but I've got the best view."

That John Osborne should have been virtually bankrupt in the last decade of his life was proof of his extravagance: His lavish homes in London and the country, his cars, wives, many generous handouts to friends and colleagues down on their luck, drink bills—"Osborne and champagne," Heilpern writes, "were as inseparable as Fortnum and Mason"—and bills from his Savile Row tailor whittled away a sizable fortune. In his prime, he made money hand over fist. Several of his plays were box office hits in Britain and around the world, and *Tom Jones* (1963), for which he wrote the screenplay, was one of the most successful films ever made. (Its profits today would be the equivalent of $247.7 million.) Since half the profits went to Woodfall Films, owned jointly by Osborne and director Tony Richardson, Osborne was a multimillionaire by the time he was 35.

After his talent for playwriting dried up, Osborne was forced to write for *The Spectator* to keep the local tradesmen at bay, prompting the Angry Old Man to complain: "That's how you end up: A f—g journalist!" Nevertheless, the columns collected in *Damn You England!* (1994) are full of salutary diatribes against the English nanny state.

So what can be said about this impossible, gifted, unhappy man? Heilpern sums up matters rather lamely in an otherwise insightful biography by saying that "his cause was always the triumphant domain of the English language where words alone are certain good and man grapples with defeat and sadness." Osborne himself was nearer the mark when he said: "At least a man who hates his mother has a standard of excellence in mind." Like Archie Rice, the down-at-the-heels vaudevillian played so brilliantly by Laurence Olivier in *The Entertainer*, John Osborne could never resist seeing his life as a bad Music Hall gag. ♦

Fanboy Tour de Force

'A spoof inside a spoof inside a spoof.'

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Hot Fuzz, a new British comedy, is one of the most inventive movies I've ever seen. It's so inventive, in fact, that it's a bit bewildering. At any given moment you're not quite sure if what you're watching is a humorous character piece, a serial-killer gorefest, a heartwarming portrait of a friendly village, or a portrait of a seemingly friendly village that hides terrible secrets.

Hot Fuzz
Directed by Edgar Wright

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

The truth is that the whole thing is a complex put-on in the manner of a Russian doll. It's a spoof inside a spoof inside a spoof. *Hot Fuzz* is a parody so sophisticated that even when it seems not to be parodying anything, you figure out later that it *was*, in fact, parodying something, but so quietly that you didn't notice, and therefore you actually misunderstood what you were watching.

Furthermore, so many different

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

types of movies are being parodied in so many different ways that it's hard to keep track. For its first 15 minutes, *Hot Fuzz* plays riffs on every movie and television show you've ever seen about taciturn, by-the-book, big-city cops. Then it shifts gears for a half-hour or so and becomes a gentle sitcom in which our big-city cop finds himself having to adjust to life in a dear little provincial burg where nothing bad ever happens.

That's before people start getting slaughtered in extraordinarily gruesome ways—murders so gruesome that viewers who were enjoying the sitcom about the lovely small town may suddenly feel like they need airsickness bags to deal with the popcorn and soda they were happily ingesting.

Then you're into a buddy picture for a bit before *Hot Fuzz* goes completely and triumphantly insane with a hilarious climactic sequence that cannot be described in any way—because to do so would be to ruin it and (provided you can take the extreme violence or can close your eyes very fast when you sense it coming) this is really a movie you ought to see.

The director is named Edgar Wright. He wrote the movie with an actor named Simon Pegg, who plays the leading role. Previously, they made a movie together called *Shaun of the Dead* about a slacker who rids London of a zombie infestation in order to win back his girlfriend. I haven't seen *Shaun of the Dead*, but the storylines of the two movies clearly indicate that Wright and Pegg are a couple of serious fanboys. And they are just the kind of fanboys who might give fanboydom a good name.

The term "fanboy" refers to the sort of person who becomes consumed with all aspects of a pop subculture: a Talmudist whose object of study isn't the Bible but rather a comic-book character, a video game and its characters, or a series of movies. The greatest concentration of fanboydom is in the worlds of science fiction and fantasy, but you can find fanboys of all kinds.

The Internet has been kind to fanboys, who now run websites dedicated to their obsessions and can actually make some money off them. Alas for them, back in the 1970s, fanboys could find comradeship only in the sad confines of comic book stores populated by ill-kempt and infrequently bathed young men. In the 1980s, they made their homes-away-from-home in the weirder and more comprehensive video-rental stores.

To date, the most successful fanboy of them all is Quentin Tarantino, the longtime video store clerk who spent

Jim Broadbent

Rogue Pictures

his first 25 years watching every movie ever made—and then showed uncommon gumption in stealing the plots and styles of little-known Asian action movies and turning them into films of his own hailed by critics who didn't yet know the work Tarantino was so mischievously ripping off.

Tarantino recently told *GQ* that he has long had the sense he was William Shakespeare in a previous life. Not that he wishes this were true, mind you: "I don't really care about Shakespeare. I've never been into Shakespeare, but then people are constantly bringing up all of these qualities in my work that mirror Shakespearean tragedies and moments and themes."

You know, it's true. In Tarantino's latest film, *Grindhouse*, he shows four car wheels dismembering the skulls of four young women in slow motion, over and over again. I could not help bringing to mind that great scene in *Queen Alexandra and Murray*, Shakespeare's 38th play, in which Queen Alexandra says to Murray, "What ho, Murray. What could it have been that I have seen! Is it not in my marrow? Are we not one to ourselves?"

To which Murray replies, "What are you hollering? You'll wake up the whole castle."

Sadly, *Queen Alexandra and Murray* has been lost in the mists of history. We only know about it from the 2,000 Year Old Man, who invested money in it. "It never came to light," the 2,000 Year Old Man explained. "It closed in Egypt."

The original "2,000 Year Old Man" skits, performed by Mel Brooks and Carl Reiner almost 50 years ago, comprise a peerless example of how to take two disparate cultural phenomena (Yiddish-inflected humor and the hugely popular middlebrow accounts of world history by Will and Ariel Durant), throw them in a blender, and make something entirely new out of the mix. That is what Edgar Wright and Simon Pegg have done with *Hot Fuzz*.

In true fanboy fashion, Wright and Pegg have obviously seen every cop-action movie made since 1980 a dozen times. But what they've done with their fanboy knowledge is to take their source material, mix it up with soft-focus English comedy, and present us with a flavorful pudding that is unlike anything we've ever experienced before. *Hot Fuzz* isn't just a homage to *Lethal Weapon* or a send-up of *Lethal Weapon*. In every way, it's a better, richer, and more memorable movie than *Lethal Weapon* or the hundreds of pieces of worthless junk that followed in its wake.

These fanboys have done what Quentin Tarantino cannot do, and what most fanboys don't even try to do. They have succeeded in transcending the trash that initially inspired them. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Recovering Fancy Lady Lawyer, 67, San Francisco, seeks progressive male companion, 35-55, for cultural and social justice events. Reply Nation Box 434." **—The Nation, *May 7***

May 7, 2007

Classified

LIBERAL LIAISONS

EROTIC ADULT PHONE CONVERSATION with sensual, environmentally responsible women. VISA/MC/AMEX. Call (888) 555-2929.

GREATEST GENERATION! WWII conscientious objector, HUAC victim and pioneer Gay Activist, looking for adventurous progressive willing to dress like J. Edgar Hoover to my Roy Cohn. Reply Nation Box 987.

SWF POET, ANTI-GLOBALIZATION ORGANIZER, and host of biweekly Pacifica Radio program on female circumcision, 56, seeks non-smoking, non-religious male, 25-35, for concerts, light carpentry, walks in the park, carrying groceries, romance? (No chest hair, please.) Reply Nation Box 736.

RED DIAPER BABY no longer just an expression: Sexy, progressive octogenarian needs Earth Mother type adept at sponge baths, casual conversation, bed-changing, etc. Reply Nation Box 948.

42-YEAR-OLD PROGRESSIVE, 5'6", funny, empathetic, slight male pattern baldness, drives 7-year-old hybrid, Kucinich fundraiser, monotheist, vegan (except on holidays), looking for passionate, curvaceous brunette/blonde/redhead, 20-30, with full-time employment, to explore politics, music of Pete Seeger, Marxism, foreign travel. Reply Nation Box 591.

HOT, INCARCERATED LADY, 31, railroaded by national security state, gorgeous, petite, good listener, tattoos not visible, wants to correspond with mature, affluent type, 80s-90s, who isn't afraid to walk on wild side. Reply Nation Box 636.

RETIRED ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR of Peace Studies in the SUNY system, 68, 4-F, one earring, Columbia ABD, Lower East Side apartment, vintage collection of LPs/stereo equipment, passionate roof gardener, Green Party precinct chair, charter subscriber to Seven Days, Eros, Lear's, is looking for love in Generation X. If you're that Pretty Woman in her early 30s who likes to cook, clean, pay bills, shop for (organic!) food, sew, prepare income tax returns, and watch the sunset from a rent-controlled balcony, I just may be the scholar/lover you've been dreaming about. Reply Nation Box 844.

[illegible]ITARY MISANTHROPE from [illegible]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED